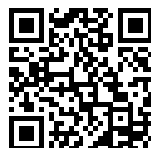

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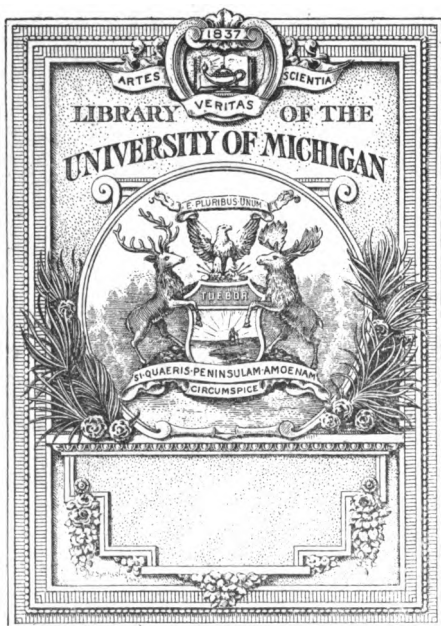
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A COLLEGE BOY

ANTHONY YORKE



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A COLLEGE BOY.

BY

ANTHONY YORKE, *friend*.

Author of "Passing Shadows," etc., etc.

Railly, Bernard



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TO THE
Most Rev. Archbishop of New York
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS
DEDICATED
IN MEMORY OF THE DAYS
HE RULED A COLLEGE.

165306

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A COLLEGE BOY.

CHAPTER I.

FRANK'S HOME.—LETTER FROM UNCLE GEORGE.—THE DECISION.

“WOULD you like to go to college, ^{Bob} ~~Frank~~?”

It was a young mother who asked the question of her only son, a boy of twelve years. The family, consisting of the mother, Frank, and his sister Beatrice, had just sat down to breakfast one morning late in the month of August. The mother held in her hand an open letter which had arrived in the first mail. The question was put with an attempt at a careless manner, but Mrs. King could not conceal her feelings. Both children looked up at her in surprise, and noticed a slight pallor in her cheeks.

“Why do you ask that question, ~~mamma~~?” the boy asked.

“Because I have just received a letter from Uncle George stating that he wished to send you to college.”

“Oh!” the boy cried in astonishment, “I rather think I would like it—that is, if you and ~~Fax~~ could come along.”

Why - why, that's impossible, please.
The mother smiled at the remark. Then a change came over her face, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Why!" the boy exclaimed, "you're crying, ~~mamma~~. That settles college. Write Uncle George and tell him that New York is good enough for me. ~~Isn't that so, Trix?~~"

Trix nodded her head and sipped her coffee, while she watched her mother.

Mrs. King quickly controlled her feelings. It was not such an easy thing to reconcile herself to the thought of parting with her boy. It had been the one dream of her life to send him to college, but now when it was near its realization the fact was not so pleasant a one as she had long imagined it would be. Still, though it would wrench her heart and take some of the joy out of her life, she was determined to accept Uncle George's offer.

"I hope, ~~mamma~~, you'll never mention college again," Frank said, noticing the long silence of his mother. "That subject is taboo in this house forever. Isn't that right, ~~Trix?~~"

"That's right!" Beatrice declared, with a decided shake of her curly head. "No more college! and no more Uncle George. 'Them's my sentiments.'"

The mother read again the letter which she held in her hand.

"Yes," she said, when she had finished it, "it is a great blessing and we have much to thank God for."

Both her children looked at her earnestly. After a pause she continued: "It has been my wish for a long time to send you to college, ~~Frank~~, but I never expected

to be able to do it. Now, thank God, Uncle George is willing to meet the expense, and I will answer him immediately that I accept his offer."

Frank and his sister were both surprised at the decided stand their mother had taken.

"Well, that's funny, ~~mamma~~!" Frank remarked. "As soon as you read Uncle George's letter about sending me to college you began to cry, and—"

"Who was crying?" his mother interrupted.

"Oh, you were," Frank responded. "I saw tears in your eyes; didn't you, Trix?"

"Yes, big ones too."

The mother smiled at the evidence. "Well, that's all over now."

"But if you don't relish the idea of my going to college, and ~~Trix~~ and I don't like it, why that's the end of it. It's three against one, so I guess Uncle George will have to capitulate."

"No, I am on the side of Uncle George."

"But the very idea of sending me to college made you cry," the boy persisted.

"Oh, that was only a passing thing. I'm your *mother*, you know."

"Well, that's just it. You're my mother and you're not in love with the idea; I'm your son and I am against it, and there's your curly-haired daughter, and she's in the same boat. Now we put our heads together and Uncle George gets a nice letter full of thanks, declining his offer. Isn't that easy?"

"Very," his mother admitted, "but it does not suit my

wishes. I want you to grow up to be a man and make your mark in the world. For that reason I am most anxious to have you go to college."

This desire of his mother's was one that was really very pleasing to Frank. She had often spoken of it to him and he was quite enthusiastic over it. When, however, he saw tears in her eyes as she read Uncle George's letter he decided that he would rather stay at home than go away and cause her any sorrow. This little family lived together more like brother and sisters than like mother, son, and daughter. The father had died when the children were babies and when they grew up the young mother made confidants of them. This will explain their easy way of talking to her, which under other circumstances would have seemed bold and forward.

"Of course, if you want me to go to college I am ready," Frank declared.

"Yes, I am most eager for you to go. It would be a bitter disappointment to me if anything should now happen to prevent your going."

The boy brightened up at the decided stand taken by his mother. He had been long anxious to become a collegian, but his mother's slender means would not permit it. Her husband had married her against the wishes of his rich uncle with whom he lived. She was a poor girl and Uncle George had expected his nephew to marry wealth. For committing the unpardonable sin of wedding poverty, the young man was disinherited. A few years after his marriage he died, leaving his wife with the two babies. The uncle would not recognize the young

mother for some years, but as he grew older he softened a little. The morning's mail had brought his letter proposing to pay the expenses of her son at college.

"I wonder what a college is like, ~~mama~~?" Frank asked, trying to bring before his mind a picture of one as he imagined it might be.

"The college you will go to is a lovely place," his mother answered. "I have seen a photograph of it. It is situated in the heart of a mountainous region and it is very healthy. I am sure it will make a man of you to send you there."

"Do you think the boys at college are like the boys in the city?"

"I think so; boys are pretty much the same all over the world. [Always doing the thing that nobody wants them to do.]"

Frank smiled a little. "I mean do you think they play ball and other games just as we do?"

"They certainly play ball; for in the picture which I saw of the college, a number of boys were playing ball."

"You know I wouldn't like to study all day long and then have"

"To go to bed and see
The chickens hoppin' on the tree'."

His mother smiled. "You will have to be more serious when you go to college, and give more time to your books than you have given at home. I couldn't bear to have you at the foot of your class."

"Oh," he said confidently, "I guess I'll be able to avoid that."

"I wish I were in your place, ^{Sister} ~~Frank~~!" his sister exclaimed. "There is a girl in my class at school who has a brother at college and she told me that every little while her mother sends a box of good things to him. We'll do the same for you. We'll send you a big cake all covered with icing, and a two-pound box of ~~French mixed~~, and a broiled chicken, and all sorts of good things!"

"Yes, you will, I don't think! If you get at the box first I'll find one gum-drop in it when I open it, (and I guess I'll have to send for an ambulance to take away the remains of the chicken.)"

"Oh, isn't he terrible, ~~mamma~~! I wouldn't do any such thing. I might just sample the candy to see if it was good enough to send you, but that's all."

"When shall I start to college, ^{in October} ~~mamma~~?" Frank asked very much interested.

"You will have to be ready by the week after next, so preparations must begin immediately."

"Dear me," murmured Beatrice, "he is to be a college boy, and his poor sister must remain at home and mourn his loss."

CHAPTER II.

*PREPARING FOR COLLEGE.—FRANK AND HIS UNCLE.—THE
JOURNEY.—THE ARRIVAL.—FRANK'S PARTING FROM
HIS MOTHER.*

MRS. KING and her two children were kept busy for the next week. She sent for a catalogue of the college which Frank was to enter, to find out what things would be necessary for him in his new home. There was endless shopping, which was the delight of Beatrice. Frank spent all his spare time with his friends talking over college life. In the midst of the excitement Uncle George appeared on the scene. (He was a small man, rather sallow in complexion, with two sharp eyes under gray bushy eyebrows. He was rather precise in his movements and asked a great many questions. Altogether he was not the kind of a man a small boy cares to fall in with.)

"Well, young man," he said, when he was seated, with Frank standing before him, "you are going to college?"

"Yes, sir," Frank responded.

"Do you know what that means?"

Frank did not answer.

"It means the opening of a new career. It means put-

ting away the things of childhood and assuming the man. It means ceasing to be a boy and applying yourself to the serious business of life."

Frank did not quite grasp all this. He only felt a cold shiver travelling along his spinal column.

"How old are you?"

"Twelve years old."

"Who discovered America?"

"Christopher Columbus."

"When did he discover it?"

"1492."

"Do you know what month?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you ought to. There is nothing like being precise in your knowledge. Try to know everything. When I was your age I could tell that."

Frank didn't know what to say, so he answered, "Yes, sir."

"Multiply twelve by thirteen."

Frank was silent.

"How much is twelve times thirteen?"

Frank's reasoning faculty, together with his memory, had taken leave of him. He looked out of the corner of one eye and saw an unhappy expression on his mother's countenance. This was too much for him, so he burst into tears. The examination ended somewhat abruptly, and he was dismissed with the admonition that a little more close study would do him no harm.

Uncle George's special delight was arithmetic. "I wouldn't give two pins for a boy who was not a good

arithmetician," was his dictum. He himself delighted in the multiplication table. He was not a man whose meat nourished him, and he took therefore more delight in the multiplication table than he did in the dinner table. He would rather do a sum in arithmetic than eat.

Frank as soon as he was freed from the frightful ordeal with his uncle, quickly made his way into another room, followed by Beatrice.

"Oh, you booby!" she exclaimed by way of consolation, "why didn't you tell him how much twelve times thirteen was?"

"I couldn't remember anything," Frank replied, still sobbing a little.

"Well, why didn't you look over at me? I was telling you all the time."

"I never thought of it."

"Just like you," she said in disgust. "I wish he had asked me. I'd show him I wasn't afraid of him."

Frank gradually recovered.

"Who discovered America? When did he do it? Why and wherefore? How much is twelve times thirteen?" This was Beatrice's indignant imitation of Uncle George. From that moment both children regarded him not as a friend, but as an enemy.

The two weeks passed rapidly enough and the day arrived on which Frank was to start for college. Uncle George appeared promptly after dinner, as he intended to accompany the party and superintend things himself. At two o'clock to the minute they descended the stairs and entered the carriage in which Uncle George had

come. The carriage rolled away from the door, Frank saluting several of his companions who had assembled to bid him good-by. The carriage skirted a small park, and Uncle George took occasion to point out to Frank a statue of George Washington, advising the boy to work hard so as to carve out a glorious future for himself. He quoted something about "lives of great men oft remind us." A little later the neighborhood through which they were passing changed again, and the carriage swung into a dirty, crowded street, from which the Hudson River was visible, flowing along pleasantly in the sunshine. After considerable manœuvering on the part of the driver, and innumerable wars of words with the drivers of other conveyances, the carriage was extricated from the crush of vehicles and entered a ferry-boat which was about to make its way across the noble river.

There was a short wait in the railroad station on the other side. Uncle George bought a box of candy and told Frank and Beatrice to amuse themselves with it until train-time. They had not quite finished the contents of the box when a door was thrown open, and a man with a metallic voice shouted out "All aboard!"

"That's our train," Uncle George announced, and they hurried into it. In less than an hour the train slowed into the trim station of the village in which the college was situated.

When the little party arrived at the college grounds Frank's eyes danced with delight at the happy scene before him. A large campus stretched out in front of the college buildings and it was alive with boys of all sizes, dressed in

baseball suits of every hue. The scene was a constantly changing one, and the showy costumes, the eager faces of the boys, and the bright sunshine combined in making it a happy picture. Some of the more sedate students were walking at the end of the college grounds, and when Frank appeared, their curiosity was immediately aroused. "New boy!" "Wonder who'll get his 'loaf'?" "Guess he's from New York; train's just in." These and like speculations were freely indulged in. A "loaf," it may be explained, meant a day's recreation for one of the old boys, during which time he initiated a newcomer into all the unwritten laws of college life.

The priest who was President of the college welcomed the little party, and after a short chat with Uncle George all arrangements were completed and Frank entered on his new life. The time for parting soon came. Mrs. King had steeled her heart against this trying moment. She felt keenly the bitter pang of leaving her only son, but knowing it was for his good she was reconciled. It was different with Beatrice, who incontinently burst into tears. Frank was about to follow her example, but a look from Uncle George froze the tears on his eyelids.

"You be a good boy," said Uncle George, "and don't let me hear any bad reports about you or home you'll come. I haven't any money to throw away."

Beatrice immediately wished that Frank would become the worst boy in the school and thus be sent home to the bosom of his family.

The President, noticing the look of anguish in the young mother's eyes, hastened to assure her that her son

would be all right. "I don't think we will have to send you any bad reports about Frank. He seems the kind of boy that will make a welcome addition to the college."

Mrs. King was grateful for these words of consolation, and they lightened not a little the heavy load about her heart. Uncle George and the President having turned aside for a moment's conversation, she seized the opportunity to say a few words to her boy.

"Frank," she said, taking him affectionately by the arm, "it is not an easy thing for me to go home and leave you here, but I want you to have every advantage, so that you may grow up to be a man after the manner of your father. I hope you will be a good boy, that you will keep up well in your classes, and that you will never do anything mean. (Remember that every night Trix and I will kneel down and say a Rosary for you—just as we always did when you were at home.) Be faithful to your own religious duties. Good-by now"—she leaned over and kissed him—"and God bless you." There was a big lump in Frank's throat, but his mother's eyes were dry.

A little later Frank stood at the entrance to the college, watching, with tears in his eyes, a carriage roll away with his mother, sister, and Uncle George. He was called back to consciousness by the sound of the President's voice. "Now, I will introduce you to one of the students, who will initiate you into the ways of our school." The President called one of the boys who was standing close by, and said, "Henry Powers, this is Frank King, a new boy. I wish you would show him about the college. You are both free from classes until to-morrow evening."

The eyes of the young lad addressed as "Henry" danced at the President's words, and making a bow which was a mixture of reverence and gratitude, he took charge of the newcomer to teach him the ways of college life.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW BOY.—HARRY POWERS.—COLLEGE DIET.—VINCENT ALLEN.—THE BISHOP.

"Boys, this is ^{Sir} Frank King," was Harry Powers' introduction of Frank to a group of lads who were standing near the entrance to the college grounds. Frank had dried his eyes and was again in possession of his wits.

"Would you kindly let me have one of your visiting cards, ^{Francis} Francis?" asked one youth with a sober face, as he stepped forward to meet the newcomer.

Frank had never enjoyed the luxury of visiting cards and was somewhat abashed.

"I'm sorry ^{but} that I haven't any," he said apologetically.

There was a suppressed titter through the crowd.

"Well, I would be thankful if you would get some printed and let me have one," the boy went on as if in earnest. "It's good form, you know. Young men who enter college should learn to be careful even about trifles."

Frank assured him he would not delay in having them printed. A wild shout greeted this announcement, and then for the first time the newcomer realized that they were getting some amusement out of him. He blushed and did not at all relish what had happened. He was not used to that kind of treatment. He thought that he was an up-to-date boy himself.

"Where do you come from, ^{Bob}~~Frank~~?" another lad asked.

"New York City."

"Hurrah!" the boy cried tossing his hat up in the air, "one more New Yorker to offset these ~~Jersey~~^{Mick} farmers."

The New Jersey boys smiled and one of them said: "I suppose your folks couldn't find a college good enough in New York, so they sent you over to ~~New Jersey~~."

"Don't mind him, ^{Bob}~~Frank~~," the New York boy laughed, "he lives in Squeedunk, where they are still voting for Andrew Jackson for President."

"By the way, ^{Bob}~~Frank~~, are you fond of hash? Now, be frank about it." It was the first speaker who asked the question.

"Well, yes," Frank admitted, "I am fond of the hash that my mother makes."

Another shout greeted this admission and Frank again felt the blood burning in his cheeks.

The spokesman heaved a heavy sigh. "What a relief to know you like hash. (He who begins well has half the work done.) Now, on a venture, I'll match our hash against that your mother makes. You see that brick wall over there? Well, what looks like mortar between the bricks isn't mortar—it's hash. That's the best of our hash, it can be used for so many different things."

"But you mustn't give Frank a wrong impression of this place," one boy protested, "we get other things besides hash; there's stew, for instance."

"Oh, yes, I forgot stew. How *could* I have forgotten

it? Stew," he said, adopting a more serious air, "is a thing you'll see a great deal of, ~~Frank~~. Do you know Latin?"

Frank acknowledged his ignorance.

"Well, the word student is derived from 'stew,' and 'dens,' which means a tooth. A student is therefore one whose teeth are especially adapted to stew."

"By the way," spoke up a boy who had been silent, "you have forgotten to mention apple sauce as an item of the bill-of-fare."

"That's a fact," several chimed in. One took the lead in describing the beauties of apple sauce. "You will get apple sauce, Frank, several times before you graduate. You will come to have a tender feeling for it. You will probably have it for supper to-night and you will most likely be eating it for supper the night before you graduate. After you graduate, if anybody offers you apple sauce, you will have his or her life."

"You know what to expect, Francis," said the boy who had first spoken to him, "'Forewarned is forearmed.' Don't eat too much of the viands which will be spread before you. 'An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.' 'Be sure you are right and then go ahead.' Keep your eye on the hash and don't trust the apple sauce. 'You may avoid Scylla, but you may not escape Charybdis.'"

"Come along, ~~Frank~~," said Harry Powers, "that fellow is as full of proverbs as Sancho Panza. Besides, this is the freshest crowd in the college, so you mustn't judge us all by these specimens."

"Remember to study the three R's, Frank," one boy called after him, "hash, stew and apple sauce."

When Frank had taken leave of his new-found friends, Harry assured him that the food was all right. He had been at another college and he knew the difference. Of course the boys, when they had nothing else to talk about, devoted their time to making fun of the food. "There's one thing I want to warn you about," said Harry, taking a fatherly tone, "you mustn't let these fellows rig you. You see you've never been to college before and you're apt to swallow everything they tell you. Don't be too gullible. When you're not sure of a thing ask me and I'll put you right."

Frank listened to the advice but he did not much like it. He felt that he was able to take care of himself and meant to do so.

"Now, I make a motion that we have a bang-up time on this loaf. We'll have to remain within these 'sacred college walls' till Christmas and there's no use in losing precious time now. By the way, did you ever study Greek?"

Frank had to admit that he never did.

"Well, did you ever study Latin?"

"No."

"And I suppose that you never studied French, either?"

Frank blushed at his own ignorance, but he told the truth, that he had never looked at the inside of a French book.

"Well I am studying all three of them, and I can tell you that when you're studying Latin, Greek and French,

and you get a 'loaf,' you feel like making the most of it."

Harry did not add that he had failed in recitation in all three branches the previous day. This, it must be confessed of course, had nothing to do with the matter.

"Well, what shall we do?" asked Frank, anxious to please.

Harry thought for a moment. "The safest thing for me to do is to first show you about the college so that you'll be posted in case any of the prefects should begin to question you. I want to pilot you around well, so as to make things solid for another 'loaf.' We will go to the study hall now."

They walked along, passing by a number of boys who were too interested in a game of ball to pay much attention to them. In a few moments they came to the college and Harry, acting as mentor, showed Frank through it. First they entered a large room which was called a play room. It served for recreation in the winter time and on rainy days. The walls of it were lined with boxes, in which the boys kept anything, from an old pair of shoes to a nest of bird's eggs. Next they entered a wash-room. Every boy had a place assigned to him, and Harry informed Frank that there was a vacant spot next to him which he would get for the newcomer, by his influence with the prefect who had charge of the wash-room. Frank thanked him for his good offices. Next they found their way into a long refectory where the hash and other victuals were served. It was scrupulously clean and the cloths on the tables looked as white as those in a Broadway restaurant. On

the next floor was the study hall. Here Harry would again use his influence and get Frank a desk next to his own. In the study hall every boy had a desk to himself, on which were a number of books and a tin box.

"What are the tin boxes for?" Frank asked.

"Oh, to keep money and other valuables in. You generally, however, keep all the money you have in your pockets; at least I do." Harry looked about the room to assure himself that there was no one present. "I'll tell you a secret if you promise me you won't ever give it away."

"I promise you I won't."

"Will you swear you won't?"

Frank had never sworn to anything, so he hesitated.

"Oh, well, if you don't want to swear to it, why that ends the matter."

Frank's curiosity was aroused. "I never swore to anything in my life," he protested.

"Well, perhaps you were never asked to keep such a secret as I was going to tell you."

That argument was a clincher.

"I swear!" said Frank, rolling his eyes solemnly.

"You won't give away on me even if we have a fight?"

"We shan't have a fight," Frank answered earnestly.

"I don't know about that," Harry said doubtfully. "You never can tell. I once gave a secret away to a boy who was a friend of mine, and after we had a fight he told on me."

"Well, I'll never do that. I'm not a sneak."

Harry was assured. He looked around the room again

and then towards the door. When he felt that all was safe he whispered hoarsely, "I've got a pistol in my box."

Frank turned pale at the information. "Is it a real one?"

"Sure; it's a Colt's revolver."

"Is it loaded?"

"You bet! A pistol that's not loaded wouldn't kill a mosquito."

"What do you do with it?"

"I shoot birds and muskrats and chipmunks and squirrels, and anything else I see in the woods."

Frank marvelled. "Do you ever hit them?"

Harry looked at him. He was not sure whether the question meant sarcasm or innocence. When he had satisfied himself that it was innocence, he said, "Well, I guess I do! I popped a bird at fifty yards last week." The real distance was ten feet, but it is hard for a hunter or a fisherman to be accurate. "Besides," Harry continued, "it is pretty dangerous in the woods on account of tramps. So whenever I go out hunting I always keep my eyes open for tramps and burglars."

"What would you do if a tramp attacked you?"

"Why, I'd pull my pistol."

"What would the tramp do?"

"Why I expect he'd pull out and run."

"But suppose he didn't run?"

"Then I'd blaze away at him."

"And suppose you happened to kill him?"

"Oh, I wouldn't shoot to kill; I'd just shoot him in the leg and he'd drop like a log."

Frank was satisfied and did not ask any more questions. They wandered from the study hall to the dormitory, where fifty small boys slept at night. After leaving the dormitory they took a look at the gymnasium, where Harry performed some perilous feats which caused him to rise still higher in Frank's estimation.

"Do you know, I think I'll like this place," Frank said, after a few minutes' rumination.

The remark seemed to Harry somewhat patronizing, and he resented it. "Well, I guess you will; you'll learn a good bit here if you keep your eyes open."

"I intend to do that."

"Well, you'd better, or they'll be opened for you. There's a pretty slick crowd of boys in this school, and they'll trot you out in great shape if you don't keep your eyes peeled."

Frank received the rebuke in silence.

"We'll go over to the infirmary now."

"What's the infirmary for?"

"Oh, it's the place you go when you're sick, and when you're troubled with 'that tired feeling.' It's a great snap to get there. You can sleep till eight o'clock, and you're fed on toast, beefsteak, and oranges. All you have to do is to lie around and forget all about Greek and Latin."

They made their way to the infirmary, in which establishment there was also a clothes-room for the students. An old nun was in charge of both, and Frank was introduced to her.

"Sister Josephus, this is a new boy named Frank King," Harry said.

The nun came forward and greeted the newcomer in a motherly way. She asked him a few questions about his trunk, and whether all his clothes were marked with his initials. She advised him strongly not to get overheated when playing, and especially not to lie on the grass. "Don't be reckless like Master Powers. He'd lie down on the ground if the snow covered it."

"All the same, Sister," Harry argued, "I was only sick once last year."

The nun shook her head. "Your guardian angel must have looked out for you then, for you were reckless enough to be ill a dozen times."

Just then a delicate looking lad with fair hair and soft blue eyes entered the room.

"Vincent, this is a new boy by the name of Frank King," said Harry.

Vincent Allen came over to Frank and, shaking his hand, welcomed him. The nun left the room for a moment and then reappeared with a small glass filled with medicine, which Vincent drank.

"We are going back to the 'house,' Vincent," Harry said. "Will you join us?"

"No, he can't go just yet," Sister Josephus interposed. "I have a cup of beef-tea ready for him."

Vincent seeing that he must remain, expressed to Frank the hope that they would soon meet again.

When Harry and Frank were outside, Harry said, "Best boy in the whole school, only I'm afraid he won't live long."

"He does seem nice. He's got such a friendly way."

"Yes, he's a fine fellow."

As the two boys were on their way back to the "house," the name by which the college proper was known, there suddenly loomed up in front of them a quiet figure walking along a by-path.

"Say, there's the Bishop," said Harry, catching his companion by the arm. The Bishop of the diocese at the same moment looked up from the book he was reading, and seeing the boys came over to them and chatted with them pleasantly, patting Frank on the head, and wishing him every success in his new life.

"The Bishop comes here nearly every week," Harry explained, when they were on their way again. "He used to be President once and he likes to come back again and be with the boys."

Harry gave his charge a few more points of information in regard to college life and then, feeling that he had done his whole duty, he turned his attention to new schemes of enjoyment.

CHAPTER IV.

THE "LOAF."—FRANK'S FIRST SMOKE.—BEHIND THE HANDBALL ALLEY.—THE LUNCH IN THE DORMITORY.—TRAGEDY OF THE BELFRY.

"SAY, King, how much money have you got altogether?"

There could be no doubt about the meaning of these words. Frank was a little staggered by them, and did not reply immediately.

"If we are going to have a large time we can't have it without money. I'm nearly broke. I've only got fifty cents. I let my money fly the first day I came back. I guess though, I can borrow fifty more, and that will make a dollar. How much are you going to put up?"

"I have three dollars and a half," Frank answered.

Harry's eyes brightened. "Well, we ought to be able to make out a pretty good time on four dollars and a half. We'll try, anyhow. Suppose we start for the village."

As they walked along, Harry disclosed to Frank his plan of campaign.

"Of course you smoke?"

"No, I never smoked in my life."

"Never smoked? Well, that's a good one. Where were you born?"

"In New York City."

"Well, you're dead slow. The best thing you can do is to learn right away, or else this loaf will be a failure."

"I think it will be a failure if I do learn. I'll surely get sick and have to lay up for repairs."

"Nonsense! I'll show you how. If you don't try to inhale you're all right. Leave it to me."

Frank said no more, but he did not like the idea of smoking. They reached the village in a quarter of an hour, and Harry immediately sought out the cigar store and bought a package of cigarettes. From there he made his way to the grocery store and invested in a box of crackers, a pineapple cheese, a pound of smoked beef, and a bottle of pickles. A dollar and a half of Frank's money disappeared like chaff before the wind.

"Now we'll take a walk along a quiet street and have a puff," Harry declared.

Frank protested against this, but Harry told him that all the boys would laugh at him if he neglected to have a smoke when there was a chance for it. Frank, like most boys, was afraid of being laughed at, so he gave in. They had no difficulty in finding a quiet street, as there was but one busy one in the village. Under the shade of the maple trees just tinged with gold, Frank smoked his first cigarette. The birds chirped gayly in the tree tops, the afternoon sunshine sifted through the branches, and the boys walked on, sending soft wreaths floating on the summer air. Frank enjoyed the cigarette so much that he must needs light another. It was a new event in his life, and he seemed to have aged by it a half dozen years.

After finishing their smoke the two boys wandered about

the village, Harry saluting almost everybody. When it was six o'clock, Harry gave the order to start for the college, and they boarded a dilapidated car drawn by two mules. The riding back to the college was a luxury that the boys did not often enjoy. It was the only proper thing to do when a boy was on a "loaf." Harry told Frank to sit inside the car, while he himself stood on the platform and talked to the driver. How Frank envied him! He longed to be an "old boy," so that he, too, could enjoy these privileges. By the time they arrived at the college supper had begun. Harry explained to Frank that boys on the "loaf" never took their meals with the others, but always waited for second table. When the refectory was cleared, Harry conducted Frank into it.

"Say, Mary, this is Frank King. You ought to put up a good supper for us."

Thus was Frank introduced to the servant who was in charge of the refectory. Mary acknowledged the introduction and spoke a few kind words to Frank. She then went into the kitchen, and a little later appeared with a plate of buttered toast and a tender steak.

"You're a brick, Mary," was Harry's familiar comment.

Frank, being hungry, ate ravenously, and when he had finished a hearty meal, he wondered how the boys could complain of such food.

"Of course you won't get steak every night," Harry said as a warning to his companion. "You'll be on hash diet by to-morrow evening."

Having finished their supper they made their way to the playground and found a number of boys, to whom

Frank was introduced. First there was Dobson, the oldest of the small boys, and the captain of the football team. Second there was Rogers, who was never out of trouble. Then there was "Patsy," a young Cuban who had arrived at the college on St. Patrick's day. His name was Manuel Riesgo Vetancourt, but by the boys he never was called anything but "Patsy." The order had gone forth that the new boys were to be examined behind the handball alley that night, so Harry and Frank formed part of the company. There were about twenty lads in the crowd assembled behind the alley, several of whom had just begun college life. One was from the interior of Mexico, and could not speak a word of English. Patsy was therefore called upon to fill the office of interpreter. Dobson, who was chairman, having to act through an interpreter, could not make much of the new arrival. He christened him "Zulu," a name the boy bore during the five years he remained at the school. The next new arrival was trotted out. He was a pretty child, clad in a black velvet suit, and his hair was fair and long.

"Good evening," the chairman said, bowing; "did you say your name was Fauntleroy?"

The boy pouted, and did not answer.

"Perhaps his name is Mamie," Rogers suggested.

The boy grew angry, blushed, and said, "I won't play any more."

"Oh, you mean thing, I'll pull your hair and scratch your face," Rogers cried, in a feminine voice.

At this remark the assembly was convulsed with laughter. The boy with the fair hair, whose name was Edgar

Brown, grew more angry, and refused to give his name. This was an unlucky thing for him, as the chairman acted on the suggestion made by Rogers, and christened the newcomer "Mamie." Edgar grew violently angry at being so dubbed, and he cried out: "I never said a bad word before in my life, but I'll say it now—you're too *darn* fresh."

Frank was the next one to run the gauntlet, but having been posted by Harry Powers, he came through with flying colors. "No matter what the boys say to you," was Harry's advice, "don't you get angry." He kept this counsel in mind, and his examination was as a consequence a brief one and did not add any fun to the evening's proceedings.

At eight o'clock the small boys retired to the dormitory. Harry carried with him a box of crackers, a pineapple cheese, and a box of sardines. There was to be a feast that night, to which Dobson and Rogers were invited. The boys were only a short time in the dormitory when the light was turned low. The prefect then lit a candle and read for a time, but he, too, after a while grew drowsy, and went to bed. The coast being clear, Harry quietly arose and awakened Frank. Dobson and Rogers, having the disease called "consumption of food," had managed to keep awake. The four boys speedily dropped into a corner, and the crackers, cheese, and sardines were produced.

After several vain attempts to eat the food, Frank said plaintively: "I don't think I want any more, Harry, I guess I'm getting sick to the stomach."

"Well, don't get sick here," Harry replied. "If you do

the jig is up and we will be caught. Come out with me to the belfry."

Frank crawled along by the side of the beds, and Harry opened the door noiselessly and conducted him to the belfry.

"Now you can get sick, and when you're better I'll come back."

"Oh, Harry, please don't leave me," Frank pleaded; "I'm so sick. Really, I think there must have been something in those cigarettes."

Harry was loath to lose the feast, and yet to leave Frank did seem mean. He knew that under the kindly care of Dobson and Rogers the cheese and crackers would grow beautifully less. Frank's sickness was certainly unfortunate.

"I'll never smoke again, Harry. I knew it was wrong and no good could come of it."

"Oh, brace up, old fellow, you'll be all right in a little while."

"No, I don't think I will. I don't think I'll ever be well again. Oh, Harry! I feel so sick. I think I'd better make a resolution never to smoke again in my life."

"Oh, don't be foolish! You'll forget all about this sickness to-morrow and then you'll be throwing stones at yourself for making such a promise."

"No, I won't; I'm sure I'll feel better if I make the resolution."

"Well, suit yourself, only don't promise to give up smoking forever. Just drop it for six months."

"No, I'm done with it forever."

"Well, you'll be sorry some day you didn't take my advice. You know you've got to keep your lawful oaths and vows, so if you give up smoking forever, and then afterwards you want to smoke, there's your lawful oaths and vows staring you in the face."

Frank, between his groans, considered the matter. Finally he reached a decision. "I'll give up smoking for five years and I won't back down one month; so please don't ask me, Harry."

"All right, suit yourself. Only remember I wanted to make the limit six months."

"I think I'll make the promise right away."

"Oh, to-morrow morning will do; there isn't much fear of you're smoking to-night," Harry added, smiling.

"Oh, please don't laugh at me, Harry; you don't know how bad I feel. I won't be satisfied until I make that promise, so here it goes. 'I-promise-not-to-smoke-any-cigarettes-for-five-years,' " said Frank solemnly, rolling his eyes up at the big bell which was frowning down upon him.

Harry listened with rapt attention. "How do you feel now?" he asked.

"My mind feels better, but my stomach is worse," Frank answered.

"That was a pretty safe promise you made."

"How?"

"Why, you didn't say anything about giving up pipes and cigars; you only mentioned cigarettes."

"Oh, I meant them, too. I guess I had better begin the promise all over again and bring them in."

"You'd better leave well enough alone. You've made

the promise, so let it rip. The least said the easiest mended. You've got a good margin now, and don't you get any deeper into this promise business."

As to the rest that happened that evening in the belfry it is better not to dwell upon it. People who have sailed on rough seas, and little boys who have smoked for the first time, will understand the "tragedy of the belfry." A quarter of an hour later Frank was back in his bed propped up with pillows, watching Dobson, Rogers, and Harry gorging themselves with the cheese, crackers, and sardines which his good money had bought. He felt so grateful, however, for being alive that no envious thought so much as entered his mind.

"I say, King, I'm sorry you're not in trim to-night," said Rogers as he finished the last mouthful; "but you'll be all right by to-morrow night, and Powers tells me that he has some more good things down-stairs locked up in his study hall box."

"Good-night," said Dobson quietly. "We'll polish off the rest to-morrow evening."

Harry smoothed the pillow under the head of the sick boy and took away the remnants of the feast. Frank was now alone and the events of the day crowded upon him. He had smoked his first cigarette, and he had paid for a supper which he did not taste. He was getting experience; and it must be confessed he was paying for it like a little man.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW DAY DAWNS.—A COLLEGE IS NOT A HOTEL.—TRIP TO THE VILLAGE.—COLLEGE SONGS.—AN INTERRUPTED FEAST.

THE next morning the sun shone in through the dormitory windows, and a shaft of gold fell on the fair hair of Edgar Brown, as he slept in his little bed. Six sisters at home had striven with might and main to make a girl of him, and to a certain extent they had succeeded. The sunshine coming into the room awakened Frank, and he looked about him to get his bearings. He felt well, for which he was profoundly thankful. He raised himself on one arm to take a view of the dormitory. Harry Powers was sleeping quietly. Dobson was sitting up in bed, his head propped up with two pillows, one of which he had gently slipped from under the head of the weary Rogers. He was very intent on a book of geography, which fact astonished Frank. What kind of a place must it be where boys have to begin studying before leaving their beds in the morning? He himself had not been partial to books. Certainly he never expected to have to begin at them before rising from bed. Books he placed in the same category as castor oil—things which must be

met and vanquished, but that are never to be sought after. Dobson turned a page, and began studying the next one with great earnestness. Frank, finding no comfort in looking at such a bookworm, changed his position so as to survey the other side of the dormitory. Harry Powers had just awakened, and he gave Frank a sleepy smile. The next moment he took the pillow from under his head, and leaning over the bedside, gave the peaceful Rogers a whack with it. Rogers awoke so suddenly that he came near falling out of bed. After recovering himself and telling Powers that he was a trifle "too fresh" he borrowed the latter's pillow and gave a blow with it to the sleeping "Fauntleroy." It seemed a shame to thus rudely disturb the sleep of that poor little innocent, as his golden head lay on the pillow, but Rogers was a boy of very dull feeling. The pretty picture of "Fauntleroy" at rest made no impression on the vandal in the next bed. "Art for art's sake" and Master Rogers had nothing in common. As soon as the pillow descended, "Fauntleroy" awoke with a scream. By the time he looked around him, Rogers was gently snoring. Half the dormitory was awakened by the cry, and the prefect came out of his room and shouted, "Stop that noise down there!" Everything was quiet immediately, and Dobson resumed a reclining position.

Not many minutes afterwards there was an ominous shake in the belfry and the big bell rang out clearly. The prefect went around from bed to bed, awakening those on whom the bell had no effect. One by one the boys left the dormitory, "lax in their gaiters, laxer in their gait." Dob-

son closed his geography, first extracting from it a smaller book by an author named Oliver Optic.

Frank did not see through this trick then, but he learned it later. When he had finished dressing he walked in his stocking feet to the door leading to the landing. The prefect was standing near-by, and seeing that the boy had no shoes on, he stopped him.

"I left my shoes out there," said Frank, pointing to the landing, "to have them blacked."

"To have them blacked!" the prefect repeated in amazement.

"Yes, sir; a boy told me last night that if I wanted to have them blacked I should put them outside, and so I did."

"Well, go look for them," the prefect said, hardly able to suppress a smile.

Frank went to find his shoes, but, of course, they were missing. When he returned the prefect said to him: "Now, for the future be more on your guard. Don't believe everything the boys tell you, and try to remember that a college is not a hotel."

The first boy who left the dormitory stumbled over Frank's shoes. He knew the joke, and so he gave them a kick half-way down the stairs. Others followed his example, and when Frank found his shoes they were lying on the floor of the wash room and every one was laughing at him.

When the students had finished their morning toilet, they repaired to the study hall for prayers. Harry saw the prefect, and had Frank assigned to the desk next to his

own. After prayers were over there was an hour's study, followed by breakfast. A prefect presided at the head of the table at which Frank sat, and Dobson took charge of the water pitcher at the foot.

"I think I'll begin with a glass of water," Frank said, after he had thrown his napkin over his knees. He passed his glass to Dobson, but it was not filled.

"No water in the morning, King, it's bad form," called out Dobson cheerily. "You can have water at dinner and supper but not at breakfast." Dobson thought he did enough work at two of the meals, filling out water, and the arbitrary rule at breakfast was not disputed by anyone, as Dobson was an acknowledged leader.

"What you need is a plate of 'mystery,'" Dobson said, pointing to the hash.

Frank accepted the situation good-humoredly, and passed his plate for some hash. In every college there are a number of unwritten rules made by the boys themselves. Some of these are, it is true, rather arbitrary, but it behooves a new boy to learn them quickly and obey them. By doing this his life will run along with fewer jars and he will get on with the older boys without any friction. That was the one excellent feature of the "loaf." By the time it was finished the new boy had gained a knowledge of these unwritten laws, and the best thing for his health was to obey them.

When breakfast was over a crowd of boys gathered about Harry Powers, each one wanting something brought up from the village. One wanted a morning paper, another a baseball, another the last number of the "Sporting Life,"

and another a half dozen oranges. "Tell the shoemaker to send up my tennis shoes;" "Find out if the New Yorks beat the Chicagos yesterday;" "Bring me a box of crackers." Such were the errands that were given Harry as he made ready to start for the village. Frank enjoyed the excitement, and felt highly complimented when asked by several of the boys to go on messages for them. When the two lads had made the round of the village and performed the tasks set them, they returned, weighted down with all sorts of merchandise. In the afternoon the same performance was gone through, and Frank came back to the college for supper very hungry, and passed up his plate for a second "dose" of stew, which he found a most palatable dish. When supper was over a number of the boys sat around on benches under the trees and sang college songs. This was a new experience for Frank, and he envied Harry Powers, who knew the choruses and was able to join in them. It seemed to Frank that all the songs he had ever heard were sung, together with a number of others which were new to him. Some were sung as slowly as a funeral chant and others were rendered with a rattle and a dash. The woods rang with the choruses:

"Oh, we'll have beefsteak and spare-rib stew
Want all the children fo' to follow me,
And nice boiled onions dipped in dew
Halla, halla, halla, hallelujah!"

At the end of a half-hour the bell rang, giving notice that the recreation time was over. At the sound of the bell the boys fell in line and marched toward the study hall, singing in a sad and lugubrious way:

"Where, oh, where are the good old seniors?
Where, oh, where are the good old seniors?
Where, oh, where are the good old seniors?
Safe now in the wide, wide world.

"They've gone out from their Alma Mater,
They've gone out from their Alma Mater,
They've gone out from their Alma Mater,
Safe now in the wide, wide world."

The bell tolled again as a sign that silence was the order of the night, and the boys filed quietly into the bright study hall. Harry and Frank being still on the "loaf," were excused from their books. Harry was just making up his mind how he would spend the evening when suddenly he heard his name called. He looked around but could see no one. Again his name was repeated, and this time he discovered a head sticking out from behind a huge oak tree. He hurried in the direction of the head and found that it belonged to Rogers.

"Hello, Rogers!" he exclaimed with delight, "what are you doing here?"

"Hush," whispered Rogers, "I'm not going in to-night. 'Patsy' is hiding behind that tree over there."

Harry looked and saw the "Don" peering from behind a tree.

"Say, this is fine!" Harry exclaimed. "There will be a hot time in the old town to-night."

"Got anything good to eat in your locker?" queried Rogers, who could eat "all round the clock."

"Sure," Harry responded. "We'll take a quiet sneak to the steam house and we'll have a regular Delmonico spread."

The boys reached the rendezvous by easy stages, dodging behind trees and keeping a sharp watch on the door out of which the prefect might emerge at any moment.

"Now you stop here and I'll go and get the stuff," said Harry.

"It's a pity Dobson isn't with us," Rogers said sadly. "I wanted him to stay out but he wouldn't. He's got some old book called *David Copperfield* and he's crazy to read it."

"Suppose I get permission to go to my desk in the study hall and then I can tip him off about this racket."

Rogers seconded the motion, and what was on the tapis for the evening was brought to the notice of Dobson. When Harry returned with the eatables he found Dobson waiting patiently with the others. It seems that Dobson had a tooth that could bleed at a moment's notice. A dentist had advised him to have it pulled out, but he valued it too highly to part with it. When he could advance no other excuse to leave the study hall, a bleeding tooth and a bloody handkerchief were things not to be despised.

To make a long story short, as those say who never do anything of the kind, the feast began. Potted ham, French mustard, five o'clock tea crackers, a bottle of small pickles, boneless chicken, and two glasses of jelly, were on the bill of fare. Notwithstanding the fact that it was less than an hour since these boys had finished a hearty supper, they fell to with a good will, and in a quarter of an hour the platter was licked clean, and another dollar of Frank's money was, as the Latin phrase has it, "*non est.*"

Just as the meal was concluded, and Frank and his friends felt at peace with all mankind, a step was heard on the gravel walk, and immediately the candle was put out and silence reigned supreme. The door was opened softly and Mr. Livingstone, the head prefect, entered. Then the world stood still, and everything came to a halt. The prefect looked about into the four corners of the room but saw nothing. Concluding that the room was empty he took his departure and closed the door. As he came out into the night, he lifted his eyes to the starry sky, and the brilliancy of a constellation attracted his attention. He then let his eyes roam over the broad expanse, picking out the stars in the Great Bear. While thus standing, his thoughts riveted to the heavens with the attention of "Some far-off watcher of the skies, when a new planet swims into his ken," he suddenly heard a voice break the stillness of the night.

"It's all right, fellows, he's gone!" the voice said.

The reverie of the "Philosopher," as Mr. Livingstone was called, was thus rudely broken, and as he came to a sense of his surroundings he recognized the voice of the ever unfortunate Rogers. He stepped quickly back into the steam house, and in a stentorian tone commanded, "Rogers and the rest of you, come down here immediately."

Rogers, receiving a personal invitation, came down first, the others following him in single file, Frank shaking all over with fear. He did not know exactly what crime he had committed, but he knew he was guilty of something.

When the boys had descended, the prefect lectured them

and ordered them back to the study hall for future reference. Then out spake Harry Powers boldly: "You know, Mr. Livingstone, I'm excused, so I don't have to be in the study hall to-night."

"Yes, I know that," the prefect answered, "but I also know that you have no permission to come in here. This is out of bounds and you shouldn't be teaching a new boy to break rules." With this censure Harry and Frank went free, much to Frank's relief.

A little later the bell for night prayers rang, and after prayers were said the small boys were sent off to bed.

Rogers felt uneasy, and to add to his misery Dobson looked daggers at him. "Just like Rogers," Frank heard Dobson say to Harry, "he never opens his mouth but he puts his foot in it. If he had kept quiet we wouldn't have been caught."

Frank offered his condolence in a whisper to "Patsy," who slept near him. The "Don" took the matter philosophically, saying, as he clapped his hand on his stomach, "Chicken feel verra goot; prefect come along, chicken feel no goot."

One by one the boys jumped into bed. Frank, having taken off his clothes, did likewise, but he stuck hopelessly in the sheets, and kicked and spluttered about, to the great amusement of his neighbors. He did not know what was the matter until Harry Powers came to his assistance, saying, "They've played a trick on you; this is what is called a 'French bed,' and if you kicked a little more you would have put your foot through the sheet." With Harry's assistance Frank soon managed to get his

bed in order. He had just tucked the clothes about him when another bed near his fell to the floor with a loud crash. The prefect hurried to the scene, and found poor "Fauntleroy" presenting a sorry spectacle in the meshes of his bedclothes. The boys laughed loudly, enjoying the discomfiture of the "Lord," and Frank entered into the fun as hilariously as the others. The prefect reconstructed "Fauntleroy's" bed and lowered the light, warning all to keep quiet. He had not arrived at the end of the dormitory before another crash shook the room, and when the light was again turned up, Frank lay on the floor, his bed scattered about him. At first he was frightened, but as he came to himself he enjoyed the experience, and joined in the laugh at his expense.

By this time the prefect was angry and threatened a severe punishment to the boy who had "set the beds," if he could find him out. After that the silence was unbroken and Frank fell into a refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

*END OF THE "LOAF."—IN HARNESS.—JORDAN THE BULLY.—
FRANK TRIES TO AVOID A FIGHT.—HIS EFFORTS NOT
CROWNED WITH SUCCESS.*

THE next morning Frank's "loaf" came to an end, much to the regret of Harry Powers. Frank himself was anxious to begin work, as everything was new to him and aroused his curiosity.

The bell rang, announcing that the morning recreation was over and that class was to begin. The boys assembled in the study hall and the head-prefect read out the classes that were taught during that hour. Frank had been assigned to class the evening before and had been given the books that he would need in his different classes.

"Second Preparatory History Class!" the prefect called out.

"Come along, Frank," Harry Powers said, nodding to him.

Frank hastily took his book, and started down a long corridor in the wake of the older boy. He remembered the vision of Dobson with an open volume before six o'clock in the morning, and his heart beat a little faster. He felt he would never be able to keep up with his class.

The teacher spoke kindly to Frank, asking his name, and telling him that history was an essential branch of study, and that he hoped Frank would give great attention to it. This reassured Frank, and he made golden promises. Then the recitations began.

"Harry Powers, please tell me who were the Hessians, and what part they took in the American Revolution?"

Harry raised his eyes in surprise. Neither he nor Frank had looked at the inside of the history book.

"Don't you know?" the teacher asked again.

"No, sir," Harry responded, "I have been showing Frank King about the college." He would not dare use the word "loaf," as that word was an abomination to the professors. The teacher accepted the excuse, but added the remark that Harry might have used the hour given him before breakfast to prepare the lesson.

The next name called was Jordan. The boy who answered to this name got up somewhat reluctantly, and his manner indicated that he was not ready to recite. He had slept during the time he should have been preparing his history lesson, and when the time for study was over he banged his book on the desk, saying to himself, "I'll trust to luck." But luck deserted him. As soon as his name was called, he whispered to Frank, who sat next to him: "You tell me, or I'll kill you when I get you outside!" He twisted his face out of shape to make his threat seem more terrible.

Frank did not at all like the task imposed upon him. There was nothing, it was true, in his code of honor which

forbade him helping a friend in distress, but on the present occasion he felt that there was no obligation on him to help Jordan.

“Why didn’t he ask the boy on the other side to help him? I’m a new boy, and the teacher has been kind to me, and I want to start well the first day.” This was the way Frank reasoned and on this reasoning he shaped his conduct. As a consequence Jordan made an utter failure, and all in the class who dared do so laughed at him for his mistakes. The teacher told him to sit down and study his lesson and try to make up for his laziness and stupidity.

As soon as he was seated he began to give the unfortunate Frank an exhibition of what he intended doing to him in recreation time. He put his closed fist first to one of his eyes and then to the other; next to his nose and mouth, and finally under his jaw, dangerously near to the jugular vein. Frank, of course, understood this pantomime, and it must be confessed he did not enjoy it. Jordan was a bigger and an older boy, and had a reputation in the school as a fighter and a bully. Frank managed to get his book before his face, and whisper in a mild tone to Jordan: “I didn’t know the lesson—this is my first time in this class.”

Jordan replied, “Why didn’t you look in the book and then tell me?”

Frank responded, “Because I was afraid.”

A sneer that ended in the roots of Jordan’s hair was his answer.

“I’ll help you next time,” Frank promised.

"There won't be any next time for you—you'll be in the infirmary. I'll make mince-meat of you!"

"Jordan, study your lesson and keep quiet! You're disturbing the new boy next to you."

Jordan looked down at his book. What the teacher said about the new boy only angered him the more against Frank.

At length the bell sounded and the boys were sent back to the study hall, Jordan on the way giving Frank a pinch which brought the tears to his eyes. Several of the smaller boys crowded about Frank to offer their condolences.

"Jordan will do you"; "Don't let him get your head under his arm"; "Fight with your head if he does"; "Try to trip him"; "Grab his thumb and twist it"; such was the advice thrown from all sides at Frank. He listened quietly to these remarks, but they made him feel very uncomfortable. He was nervous because it was his first day in class, and to be promised a beating after he had eaten his dinner did not relieve this feeling. He began to get lonesome, and a desire to return home fast filled his heart. Powers, who sat next to him, tried to console him, advising him to remain near the prefect during the recreation after dinner, and that the whole thing would blow over.

Frank gave some consideration to this advice, but resolved finally not to follow it. He had not been a "mamma's boy" at home, and he did not propose to be a "prefect's boy" at college. Gradually his courage came back to him, and anger filled his breast. "Jordan had no right," he reasoned, "to demand of a new boy to tell him.

It was asking too much. In fact, it was a mean action, and Jordan ought to be ashamed of it, instead of wanting revenge." Frank looked across the study hall and measured Jordan well with his eyes. The sight was not very reassuring. Jordan was heavily built and had large strong hands. Besides he had made a name for himself as an athlete. Frank, however, had seen small boys get the best of big ones in a fight on more than one occasion; in fact he had done that once himself. This was some consolation. "I guess I'm in for it, and I'll have to do the best I can," he said to himself wearily, as he took up a book. He tried to dismiss the subject from his mind but it came back with cruel persistence.

The morning wore on. He attended a class in Latin, which was a new experience for him. Some of the small boys who tagged after Jordan through fear of him, renewed their regrets to Frank.

At last the bell rang for dinner. Jordan sat down to a hearty meal; Frank tried to eat, but was too nervous. He noticed several of his companions casting pitying glances at him. Some one whispered that "the new boy, King, is so mean he would let a fellow fluke before he would help him." The tears sprang to Frank's eyes as he denied the charge. The last piece of pie had disappeared, the President of the college looked around the refectory to assure himself that every one had finished eating, and then the bell rang which announced the end of dinner.

When dinner was over the students stood up in their places, grace was said reverently, and they marched in single file to the door. As soon as they reached it bedlam

was let loose. There is nothing that will so excite small boys as the prospect of a fight.

One lad, eager for the fray, cried, "Come on, boys, Jordan and King are going to have it out behind the steam house." Immediately he received a box on the side of the head from an older boy, accompanied by the admonition to keep quiet or the prefect would "twig" the whole thing.

"Come on, Frank," whispered Harry Powers, "we'll pretend not to see Jordan."

Frank, anxious to avoid a quarrel, acted on this advice, and both boys started in the direction of the ball-field. Jordan, however, was not to be put off so easily. He quickened his pace and soon reached them. He placed a small piece of wood on Frank's shoulder, gave it a sharp rap, and then exclaimed: "Now, King, you've got to fight, or you're a coward."

Frank's cheek flamed at the word "coward." "I don't see that knocking a chip off my shoulder makes me a coward. You're more of a coward in picking a fight with a smaller boy. If I was your size I'd soon fight you."

Harry Powers drew Frank's arm within his own and gave him a gentle pull. Frank obeyed the summons and they both walked away. Immediately a low hiss was started by the small coterie which always followed in Jordan's wake. The hiss gradually increased, till it seemed to Frank as if the whole college was hissing him. The perspiration stood out on his forehead, and his teeth began to chatter. He could hardly keep from crying.

"Coward! Baby! Mamma's boy!" were some of the

names that made his ears tingle. He stood still a moment irresolutely, and Harry, noticing this, pulled him gently on saying "Come along, Frank, and don't mind them. They're a mean crew."

Frank did not move for a moment, but when he measured the burly form of Jordan his heart sank within him, and he walked on with his friend. Just then his hat was knocked off, and when he picked it up he found that an ancient egg had damaged it.

"They're rotten-egging me!" he exclaimed in horror. A sense of shame, as if he had done some wrong action, made him blush. His anger next got the better of him; he broke away from Harry Powers, and walking quickly over to the group that accompanied Jordan he cried, "You miserable little cowards! You insult me when you are all together, but there isn't one of you that would dare do it alone!"

Silence reigned in their midst while he was speaking. Jordan walked up to him, saying, "See here, King, this fight is with me. Don't try to sneak out of it by picking a quarrel with smaller boys. Fight your equals."

"Do you call yourself my equal?" Frank exclaimed angrily. "Why, you're older and you're bigger every way than I am."

"Well, you ought to have thought of these things in the class-room this morning," Jordan answered, with a tantalizing drawl.

"You shouldn't have expected me to help you. I'm a new boy," Frank replied.

"Well," Jordan went on, in the same drawling way, "if

you won't fight like a man I suppose I'll have to spank you."

The bully had chosen his words well, and Frank's anger was instantly fanned into a flame.

"Come on, then," he cried, throwing off his coat, "and I'll show you I'm a man."

"We can't fight here," Jordan coolly replied, "the prefect will see us."

"I'll fight anywhere," Frank answered hotly.

"All right; just come behind the steam-house."

The two men, one twelve and the other fourteen years of age, started in the direction of the long, low house in which were the furnaces for heating the college buildings, the satellites of Jordan following them. Harry Powers, seeing that there was no chance now of keeping Frank from fighting, accompanied him. When they reached the battleground both boys hastily threw off their coats and vests, so as to give full play to their muscles. Seconds were chosen, Harry Powers acting in this capacity for Frank. A ring was hastily formed by the spectators, and into this stepped Frank and Jordan; Then amid profound silence the two gladiators received the word to begin the battle.

CHAPTER VII.

BEHIND THE STEAM-HOUSE.—AN UNEVEN MATCH.—THE SPECTATORS.—MR. LIVINGSTONE'S UNTIMELY ARRIVAL.

To any fair onlooker the fight was certainly an uneven one. Frank, it is true, was well made and agile, but Jordan so surpassed him in height and strength, that his success was apparently certain. Frank realized that it would be best for him to act on the defensive, and to keep out of his antagonist's way as much as possible. Jordan came up to the fighting line with a sarcastic smile playing about his hanging lip. He felt confident of success and intended to push the fighting and have it over in a few minutes. His ease and bravado won him applause from his young friends. He was only in position a moment when he struck a swinging full arm blow at Frank, which would have made a wreck of him but for the fact that it circled in the air, and landed nowhere. Frank shivered a little but pretended not to mind. He avoided the blow so cleverly that several of the boys who were not afraid of Jordan openly expressed their admiration. This helped greatly to encourage Frank. Jordan, hearing these compliments, was angered and came on more fiercely. He struck another blow which Frank dodged, getting the force of it on his shoulder. The blow was strong enough to knock Frank

down, which caused a cheer to rise from Jordan's friends. Frank got on his feet again, and as soon as he was in position Jordan made a rush at him. Frank dodged to the side, Jordan let go his right hand at him, and Frank sank to the earth.

"Get up, you little sneak, and fight fair!" cried Jordan, standing over him.

"That's all right," said one of the boys, who was more than a match for the bully; "he can fall if he wants to. He's a clever little fighter."

These were sweet words to Frank's ears. It must be explained that Frank dropped to the ground when Jordan struck at him, thus avoiding a blow that would have done him considerable damage. Frank was beginning to feel easier and more confident. At least if he were beaten now no one could call him a coward. Some of the boys, on the contrary, were praising him for his fighting qualities. Jordan was now more impatient and reckless, and forced the fighting again, Frank dodging as well as he was able. Jordan made one of his rushes, and hit Frank a severe blow on the side of the head which caused him to stagger. Had the bully followed up this advantage the fight must have ended; but to the astonishment of all he drew back with a cry of pain. He had struck his thumb on the hard side of Frank's head and it began to swell immediately. Thus he had done more harm to himself than to his opponent.

Time was called for the space of two minutes at the request of Jordan, during which his finger was bathed with cold water brought from the pump by one of his aids.

Frank was beginning to be proud of himself. It was

such a relief to know that Jordan's thumb was laid up for repairs. This would force him to use his left hand instead of his right, and Frank's greatest fear was over.

"Time's up!" cried one of the spectators, who was afraid the prefect might happen along and end the excitement. The combatants again stood face to face, Jordan being a little more careful, a thing Frank was not slow to notice.

"Getting afraid, Jordan?" asked one of the boys, laughing.

The bully was nettled by the remark and it caused him to make another rush at Frank. This time he was more successful, and before Frank could put into operation his trick of falling to the ground Jordan had his head in chancery. A shout went up from the bully's friends and Harry Powers' heart failed within him. He looked about to see if there was any prefect in sight so that he could cry: "Cheese it, here comes the prefect!" but to his dismay there was no prefect visible. Jordan began immediately pummelling Frank's head and face. Frank did what he could to protect himself, but the blows kept raining upon him. His courage commenced to fail, and he had about concluded that it was time to cry out that he had enough when suddenly a brilliant idea entered his mind and he proceeded to act upon it. He protected his face as well as he could with one arm, and then, reaching out with his free hand, he gave Jordan's injured finger a violent wrench. With a cry of pain the bully released his hold, and Frank sprang away.

"Why don't you fight fair?" Jordan cried, the tears

running down his cheeks. They were welcome tears to Frank and compensated somewhat for the pummelling he had received.

Time was called again at Jordan's request. Of the two boys Jordan was really suffering the more, as those who have felt the pain of a sprained thumb know.

"First blood for Jordan!" exclaimed one of his friends.

"How do you feel, old fellow?" Harry asked, coming over to Frank.

"Fine!"

"Don't you think you had better give in?"

"No, not yet; I can stand a little more."

"I'm glad Jordan's finger is hurt; it sort of evens things."

"Yes, it's a lucky accident for me," Frank answered, smiling.

"Time's up!" an anxious onlooker cried.

Several of the boys came over to Frank and shook hands with him, encouraging him by calling him "a little man," and telling him he had a good chance yet to win. Frank's heart beat happily. It was so good to know he was making friends.

Jordan came forward again to do battle. "See here, King, I want you to fight fair. You leave my sore finger alone."

"Well, if you don't want your finger hurt you had better put it in your pocket." Frank delivered this advice with an impudent smile, which caused a loud laugh at Jordan's expense.

"Hurrah for Frank King!" shouted Harry Powers in his enthusiasm.

Jordan glared at him. "I'll settle your hash later, Powers."

"You'll need a week's rest after this," Harry answered tauntingly.

"Less talk and more fight, Jordan," advised one of the large boys.

The battle royal began again, Frank following the same line of action, and dodging the blows of his opponent with great agility. Jordan lost his patience and made a rush at the smaller boy. Frank jumped quickly to one side, Jordan stumbled, and just as he did so Frank let go his right hand and it struck the bully full in the face, causing the blood to flow from one of his nostrils. The "young barbarians all at play" gave three cheers and Harry Powers turned a somersault in his happy excitement. Master Jordan did not quite know "where he was at," and it took him several seconds to get his bearings. Frank stood facing him in a nonchalant way, with his arms akimbo. On both sides of the youthful warrior words of praise and congratulations were whispered into his ears, sounding like sweet music.

Jordan stepped forward to renew the fight, but he was a decidedly chastened bully. His wonted braggadocio had left him, and a general appearance of wariness and weariness was noticeable in his eyes. The excitement was now intense, for what promised to be a walk-over had developed into a hard fought battle. Other boys, attracted to the spot by a sort of intuition, swelled the number of on-

lookers. The pickets who were on watch to signal the approach of a prefect, threw caution to the winds and joined the group about Frank and Jordan. The noonday sun looked down peacefully, sometimes half-blinding the contestants as their manœuvring brought their eyes in a line with its rays.

“Finish him up, King!” one boy shouted.

“Don’t lose any more time with him, Jordan!” one of his admirers called out.

Now they are at it again, dancing about the arena, and watching each other closely for an advantage. Jordan is puffing with the exertion and he knows he cannot last much longer. Again he makes a rush at his antagonist. This time, however, Frank does not attempt to dodge, but closes with the bully, getting a firm hold on him. Jordan, not expecting anything like this was not prepared for it. Frank’s arms quickly tightened about him, there was a swaying of bodies, a cracking of joints and then, suddenly, one of Frank’s feet struck the foot of Jordan and down together they fell, Frank on top.

A mighty shout rent the air, hats were tossed on high, and “three cheers for King” sounded through the adjacent woods. Then all was still again. Softly on the ambient air fell the words:

“And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like a snail
Unwillingly to school.”

Oh, horror! it was the voice of the “Philosopher,” who was strolling along reading from Shakespeare. The pickets had forgotten their duty in the excitement, and Mr.

Livingstone had come from no one knew where. Just like what a philosopher might be expected to do ! He had been seen but a little while before at the end of the field. Unfortunately one of the students happened to leave a copy of Shakespeare under a tree, while he joined in a game of tennis. The prefect happening upon it, opened it, and fell to reading it. Wrapt up in its beauties he wandered on, unconsciously seeking an out of the way path, which had its logical ending at the steam house where the fight was in progress. Hearing the loud cheer, he raised his eyes from the book and saw that something was amiss. He hurried up and caught the boys red-handed. Looking angrily at the group for a moment, he said, in a severe tone:

“Jordan and King, report to me when this recreation is over !”

The two boys quickly rolled down their sleeves and put on their vests and coats. The crowd then rapidly dispersed, and Frank's first college fight was over.

CHAPTER VIII.

*AFTER THE BATTLE.—THE INCONVENIENCE OF HAVING AN
UNCLE.—HARRY POWERS AS DIPLOMAT.—THE FINISH
OF THE DIPLOMAT.*

FRANK and Harry Powers went quietly to the wash-room, where the former bathed his face, and after finishing his toilet, looked quite respectable for a boy who had just ended a hard fight.

"Let's come and sit under the old apple-tree and talk over things," Harry proposed.

Frank gladly assented, and they started on their way. Many times the young pugilist was stopped by boys of his own age, who complimented him on his prowess, and insisted on shaking hands with him. Some of them had suffered from Jordan's bullying, and it was a satisfaction to them to know that he had met his match in a younger boy. Frank and Harry finally reached the old apple-tree and threw themselves on the grass under it.

"Well, Frank," Harry began, "you're a daisy. It was the best fight I ever saw. I expected him to murder you in the first round."

"So did I," Frank answered, laughing, "for he's so

much bigger and stronger than I am. I guess it was a lucky thing for me he hurt his finger so early in the fight."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Harry, "that had nothing to do with it. You would have whipped him at the end, for he was getting winded. He had the strength, but you had the science, and that's what counts every time. By the way, old fellow, where did you learn all those fighting tricks?"

"I learned them from a cousin of mine," Frank answered, smiling. "He had two pairs of boxing gloves, and whenever I went to visit him we always put on the gloves. He was bigger than I, and I had to be pretty sharp when I boxed with him, as he did not strike at me like a feather."

"Well, that fight was the best thing that ever happened in this school. You'll have no more trouble with Jordan, and I guess he'll treat smaller boys more gently than ever he did up to this. I'm better satisfied over it than if I received a Christmas box."

While Harry was running on in his happy, excited way, Frank's eyes wandered over the ball-field, and there, between himself and the beautiful vista of green fields losing themselves in the slope of the mountains, loomed up the black outline of the "Philosopher." A change immediately came over Frank. He felt a sinking sensation somewhere within him, a dim mist settled over his eyes, and an inexpressibly sad look fixed itself on his countenance. Harry, noticing his silence, looked up, and seeing his companion's sad face exclaimed, "Why, Frank, what's the matter with you?"

Frank turned his head aside and a hot tear stole down his cheek. Harry looked at him in amazement for several moments, unable to account for the sudden change. "Do tell me, Frank," he pleaded, coming nearer, "what is the matter with you?"

The pent up emotion broke through at last, and burying his face in his hands he sobbed violently. "I'll be expelled from the college for fighting, and it will break my poor mother's heart." The idea seemed to grow upon him as soon as he had formulated it into words, and the sobbing increased.

"Oh, Frank, don't cry!" the comforter pleaded, "you won't be expelled for a little fight like that. Why, you were only standing up for your rights! A boy isn't expected to be a mollycoddle. Besides, the 'Philosopher' won't report you. He's the 'whitest' prefect you ever saw. He settles every case himself. He'll only give you some lines to write, or keep you in bounds for a week, that's all."

"Oh, no!" Frank sobbed, "he'll have me expelled. I'm a new boy, and he'll think it's all my fault, and that I'm a disturber in the college, and I'll be sent home."

The sobbing began again.

"Oh, that's all foolishness," Harry protested, "nobody is ever expelled for so small a thing."

Frank controlled himself and said: "Did you ever read the catalogue of the college?"

Harry admitted that he had not.

"Well, I did, and it says that 'students of a refractory disposition will not be kept in the college.'"

"Well, you haven't got a refractory disposition."

"I know I haven't, but they'll think I have."

"They won't think anything of the kind."

"Oh, I wish they wouldn't."

"Well, they won't! Your disposition isn't any more re-frac-to-ry [Harry had some difficulty with the word] than mine, and they haven't expelled me. Besides, you needn't worry; I can fix the whole thing with the 'Philosopher' myself."

"Oh, can you?" Frank cried.

"Sure," Harry responded, jumping up, "I'll go and make things O K with the 'Philosopher' now."

Frank checked his grief. "Please tell him, Harry, that I'm not of a refractory disposition. You're an old boy, and he'll believe you."

"Why certainly," the self-appointed envoy answered, drawing himself up as he became conscious of the office he was about to fill. "I'll have the whole business settled in five minutes. The 'Philosopher' is a brick, even if he is a prefect. I never knew him to have but one boy expelled, and that was for having a bad book. He won't stand anything like that, but he's a trump every other way."

Frank felt much relieved by these assurances. "You see, Harry, the whole trouble is with my uncle. He sent me here, and if I don't get on well he's sure to take me away, and that will break my mother all up. It's an awful thing, Harry, to have an uncle; I hope you'll never have one."

"Why, I have one," Harry answered, somewhat surprised.

"You have!" Frank exclaimed.

"Yes, and he's the finest old man you ever met."

"Do you like him?"

"Why, of course."

Frank unconsciously drew away a little from his friend, and looked at him more closely. After all, he thought to himself, had he not made a mistake in confiding in this boy? He surveyed Harry critically, and then murmured, "He likes his uncle!"

Harry waited for Frank to speak, and finding that he was not about to do so, he said: "Why, what's wrong about my liking my uncle? He's the best old man in the world. He used to be a sea captain once, and I'll bet my hat against a crab-apple that if you knew him you'd think he was the kindest old gent you ever met."

Frank was not convinced. That there lived a boy in the whole world who would speak so enthusiastically of his uncle was certainly news to him. Confidence in his companion gradually revived, but he was forced to acknowledge to himself that he was a little disappointed in him. Harry, finding Frank more composed, and seeing the "Philosopher" in the distance, scampered across the field and soon reached the prefect.

He raised his hat as the prefect looked up from his book, and said: "I came to see you, Mr. Livingstone, about Frank King."

"Well, what about him? He's been a bad boy, and you are no better."

The reception was not a very cordial one. Harry found himself involved in the trouble, a thing he had not expected.

"We couldn't help it," he answered. "Jordan's nothing but a bully, and his crowd kept calling Frank 'coward' and 'mamma's boy' and a whole lot of names that you call 'opprobrious epithets.' And worst of all, one boy threw a rotten egg and hit Frank's hat."

"Is that a fact?" the prefect asked, in angry surprise.

"Yes, sir, they forced Frank into fighting. If you were a boy yourself, Mr. Livingstone, you wouldn't put up with such treatment."

The prefect did not enter into a discussion of this question. "It's not a good sign when a new boy gets into such a fight. I understand that it was a regular pitched battle. The President would be very angry if he heard of it."

"I know," Harry admitted, "but really it wasn't Frank's fault. If he hadn't fought, Jordan would have made his life miserable. I think, Mr. Livingstone, you ought to let Frank off this time without any punishment. If you could have seen how he cried a little while ago, you would have pitied him. He's afraid he will be expelled, and he says that would break his mother's heart."

The prefect looked interested. "Oh, it isn't so serious as that."

"Well, Frank thinks it is. If you could have seen him cry, you would have been sorry for him. And he isn't a cry baby by any means. He stood up before Jordan and took his punishment like a soldier."

"Yes, and you egged him on, too," the prefect said sharply.

Harry hung his head. The prefect looked across the field and saw the lonesome boy lying under the apple-tree. He closed his book, and putting it under his arm, started in the direction of the tree, inviting Harry to follow him.

Frank jumped to his feet at the approach of his superior.

"Well, Frank, I am sorry to find you in trouble so soon after arriving."

Frank hung his head and burst into tears. It needed only ordinary instinct and kindly human feeling to see that the boy was suffering greatly, and be it said to the honor of the "Philosopher" that he was blessed with both. As soon as he saw the serious way Frank looked at the matter, he concluded that the lad was sufficiently punished.

"I hope you won't expect me to let you have a week's holiday in the infirmary to pull yourself together," he said, resting his hand good-naturedly on Frank's shoulder. Frank, quick to see that the prefect was not angry, ceased his sobbing and hastened to disclaim any such expectation. The fight was then discussed, and from the prefect's knowledge of Jordan he knew where the blame rested. The outcome of the whole thing was that Frank was pardoned, with a warning against future fighting. When the recreation was over, the prefect met Jordan at the entrance to the study hall. Jordan turned his face away, as there was evidence of his recent fight under one eye.

"See here, Jordan," Mr. Livingstone said, sharply, "if

ever I hear again of your forcing a boy younger than yourself to fight with you, I'll take the matter in hand and castigate you in a way that you won't forget. I'll let you off this time, as the little boy you fought with gave you enough punishment."

A number of boys had now congregated at the door of the study hall. The prefect raised his voice, saying: "And when you do get into a fight, don't cry like a baby, 'Oh, you hurt my finger!'" The prefect imitated Jordan's cry at the time Frank wrenched his finger, and the boys standing about laughed loudly at the bully's discomfiture.

Jordan suffered more from this little incident than he had ever suffered before since he came to the college. It helped to keep in mind Frank's successful encounter with him. Harry Powers strutted about all day like a peacock, telling everybody of his successful diplomacy with the "Philosopher" in getting Frank out of trouble, and adding that he was ready to use his powerful influence in the interest of any boy who might get into a fix.

That same evening after prayers were said, and the boys were going quietly to the dormitories, Harry, who was an incessant chatterer, began a conversation with the boy in front of him. Mr. Livingstone heard the voice, and cried out in an angry tone: "Powers, you are worse than a magpie! Report to me after dinner to-morrow, and I'll give you some work to do during recreation time."

Harry was crestfallen. One little boy who was near him said, sarcastically: "Oh, of course, you have a pull with the 'Philosopher.'" This angered Harry the more. When

he arrived in the dormitory there was a deep scowl on his face, and he remarked to Frank that the "Philosopher" was no good, and that he had no use for him. It is always a good thing for a boy not to be too eloquent in his praises of a prefect, because he can never tell how soon he may have to revise his opinion.

CHAPTER IX.

AN AMERICAN POMADE.—CAPTAIN DOBSON.—THE MATCH GAME.— VILLAGERS VS. COLLEGE BOYS.

THE new arrival from the interior of Mexico who had been christened "Zulu," was too good a thing for Rogers to neglect. He and "Patsy" introduced the young Mexican to American ways, which must have seemed strange to him. A little incident will serve to illustrate that the lines of his life did not fall in pleasant places. One day, when things were rather dull, Rogers and "Patsy" inveigled the poor Mexican into the wash room, and having prepared a mixture of shoeblacking and water, they persuaded him that it was an American pomade. The boy, anxious to learn American ways, covered his hair with the stuff, which he was instructed must be applied with a tooth-brush. When the operation was finished "Zulu" was "trotted out" for the benefit of the rest of the school.

A party to this unseemly conduct was none other than Edgar Brown, alias "Fauntleroy," alias "Mamie." The girlishness that Edgar's sisters had imparted to him had nearly all disappeared. There was a good deal of the "boy" in Edgar under the feminine veneer, and it soon asserted itself. He was only a few days at college when he became ashamed of his femininity, and proceeded to unlearn all that his six sisters had taught him.

Frank took no part in the hair-dressing of the young Mexican. He kept very quiet after his encounter with Jordan, and he recited so well in his classes that his teachers complimented him. His fight with the bully had one happy consequence. It served as an excellent introduction to all the small boys, who admired his prowess, and were anxious to make his acquaintance.

The baseball season in the fall of the year was a short one, and was followed by the football season. A game of football had been arranged with a team from the village for the first day of October, and the small boys were in a fever of excitement at the prospect of it. Dobson captained the college boys, and Frank, though a newcomer and not very conversant with the rules of the game, was chosen a member of the team on account of his agility.

The day for the game arrived and before the sun had risen the members of the Quickstep Football Club were awake. Dobson, who was considered a weather prophet, crawled quietly out of bed to inspect the heavens. His verdict was that it would be a fine day. There were a few trailing clouds in sight, but they had no rain in them. By the time the morning prayers were said, the sun came out, flooding the study hall with its welcome light, and filling the hearts of the Quicksteps with happiness. The breakfast table was a perfect bedlam. Every boy had an opinion, and each one wanted to express it at the same time. Dobson overlooked the scene tranquilly and gave orders that no boy eat too much "mystery" for breakfast, as an overdose might be a menace to good football playing.

The team had been put on a regular diet several days

before the game. Dobson succeeded in getting graham bread served at his table instead of white bread, for he believed graham bread had certain qualities which were especially good for football players.

When breakfast was over Dobson assembled his men, and gave directions to each one as to the particular part of the play to watch. In a little while he had the team arranged to his satisfaction, and as they were well practised he felt they would put up a good fight. Dobson, easy-going in most things, was a strict disciplinarian when it came to a game of football. He had a theory that it was better to put a cow in the field, than a boy who would not attend daily practice. This made him unpopular with some of the lazier boys, but having a strong will he always carried his point.

And now for the game! Eleven small boys in black jerseys and white knee-breeches scamper on to the campus, and the ball is soon flying in every direction. It is the first cool day of the season; the air is crisp and the sun is shining gloriously. All kinds of plays are practised by the Quicksteps. Drop-kicks, punts, passing the ball from one to another, and many other manœuvres by which a touch-down or a goal may be scored. While the practising is going on a small boy comes running across the field shouting like mad: "Here comes the village team!"

Practice is immediately suspended, and Captain Dobson draws his men up in line to receive the visitors. Like a true gentleman he offers them the field for their preliminary practice, keeping his eye, however, closely on their movements, so as to get an idea of their way of playing

and their weak points. A little later the captain of the villagers tells Captain Dobson that he is ready for the game. Two umpires are then chosen, and Dobson having won the toss, chooses his goal, leaving to his opponents the kick-off.

In a moment the field is clear, the college boys are in position, the umpire calls "Game!" and the game is on. The captain of the village team makes a rush at the ball lying snugly on the ground, lifts it high in the air, but not too high, and sends it a hundred feet to the good. Now the scrimmages begin! The college boys forge ahead, and in a moment Powers has the ball; by the time the villagers come up to him he has sent it by a beautiful drop-kick far into their preserves. The college boys close in and force the playing, keeping the ball in the villagers' ground, uncomfortably near the line. For half an hour it is nip and tuck. Now the college boys gain two feet and the next moment they lose a foot. Suddenly a villager gets the ball and gives it a kick, sending it clear into the field again, and all the hard work of the collegians comes to nothing.

"Don't mind, boys!" Captain Dobson shouts, "better luck next time. If you get a chance, Powers, to run with the ball and do the dodge act, don't neglect it. You keep awake, Rogers, and you, King, play as strong as you know how on the rush line."

"Ay, ay, sir!" the lads answer, "we'll do them this trip."

The ball is once more in the open and the play is free again, the villagers this time forcing it, and bringing the

ball down to the college goal. Things are lively now ! Thirty feet from the college goal, and the ball in the hands of the enemy !

“Line up, boys !” cries Captain Dobson.

“Spread your arms well, and guard the quarter-back !” cries the captain of the villagers.

The teams line up amid great excitement. The snap-back of the villagers frees the ball to the quarter-back, who in turn delivers it to the half-back, who starts with the ball to make a touch-down. One by one he dodges past the college boys, tossing some over on their heads, and flying by others. He is fifteen feet from the line now, and all seems lost. There is but one more college player to pass. The villager makes a rush at him, and down they both go together. College boys and villagers pile themselves on the prostrate forms, there is a wild scrimmage, but alas ! the villagers have greater strength, so they force their player across the line and cry out “touch-down !”

The hearts of the college boys sink into their boots at this cry. The scrimmage is over, and the villagers break away, but lo, and behold ! their quarter-back has not got the ball at all.

Villagers and college boys are both surprised at this, when suddenly Rogers' mud-stained face looms up ten feet away from the goal, and the ball is lying safely under his arm.

How did it happen ? Why, it was the simplest thing in the world ! The half-back of the villagers thought to rush down Rogers, but he reckoned wrongly. The heads

of the two boys met, and Rogers' being the hardest, the villager fell in a heap, while Rogers retained enough consciousness to relieve him of the ball. Then came the rush of the villagers pushing their man, whom they supposed had the ball, into the goal. Rogers was too much knocked out to get upon his feet and run, and none of his own side knew he had the ball.

"Just like you, Rogers!" shouts Dobson gleefully, "always doing the unexpected."

Rogers in answer wiped the mud from his face and smiled.

"Three cheers for Rogers!" Frank shouts, and the boys give them with a will.

"Another lease of life," says Dobson. "Now for heavy play, or the game is lost."

The teams line up again, the villagers bent on putting all their strength into the play, as things are very much in their favor. In a moment the ball has been snapped and reaches Powers, who is playing half-back. In the meantime Dobson has managed to break through the enemy's rush line. Powers knew of this play before it was executed, so he throws the ball across to Dobson, who catches it prettily and starts down the field with it, carrying it within forty feet of the villagers' goal before he is brought to the ground.

"Good for you, Powers! Good for you, Dobson!" is heard on all sides.

"Nine minutes more and the first half of the game will be over!" shouts Dobson. "Now for a touch-down, boys."

A few words are hurriedly whispered by Dobson to Pow-

ers, and all line up again. The ball is snapped to Powers, who starts on a long detour for the villagers' goal. He runs to the side that the villagers least expect and Dobson follows after him. The villagers are not slow in closing in, and one of the stoutest of the team makes a leap at Powers. As he does so Powers slides the ball quickly back to Dobson, who starts off with it, Powers following after him. There is a mad rush at Dobson, but just as he is about to be overcome, presto ! the ball is passed back to Powers, who makes a clever dodge and drops inside the enemy's goal, scoring the first touch-down of the game a second before the umpire calls, "Time ! first half is over !"

A tired and thirsty crowd of boys are not sorry for the few moments' rest and a charge is made on the pies and cakes and bottles of soda water that "Auntie" has for sale at the cost of "five cents for any article on the stand."

Rogers and the careless ones, heated as they are, throw themselves on the grass. But it is only for a little while they remain there. Sister Josephus happens along, and sends word to the prefect that several small boys are in danger of getting pneumonia, and Rogers and company are on their feet in a moment. And now well rested, fed, and watered, the rival teams begin the second half of the game.

The ball this time is in the hands of the college boys, and Dobson has the kick-off. He rushes at the "leather," but instead of making a long kick he just touches the ball, and then picking it up starts for the opposite goal. By the

time the villagers have surrounded him he is more than half-way down the field. Powers has been following him at a distance of about twenty feet, and when Dobson sees that he is about to be hemmed in he throws the ball quickly to Powers, who makes more headway before he is brought to a stop.

The villagers have the strength, but the college boys are more than a match for them in scientific playing. The teams line up and the college snap-back delivers the ball to the quarter-back, but alas ! the rush line of the home team is weak in one part, and a sturdy villager pushes his way through and is upon the quarter-back before the lad fairly has the ball. Down goes the quarter-back, and the villager with the ball under his arm is off like the wind. The villager is strong and a good runner, and he has an open field before him. On he goes, and it would seem that nothing can prevent him making a touch-down. He flies past several of the college boys and is within twenty feet of the goal, when suddenly he finds some one clinging like a leech to him. He tries by different movements to rid himself of the burden, but his struggles are in vain and he falls exhausted on the grass.

The object that has been clinging to him with what an on-looker called "the pertinacity of a horse-fly" is the ever faithful Rogers, the keeper of the goal. The villager rises in an angry state of mind.

"I claim a foul, umpire ! I wasn't tackled fair !"

Rogers' blood is up in a moment. "Do you mean to say I didn't tackle you fair ?" he cries.

"No, you didn't."

"Yes, I did."

"Oh, you're crazy!"

"Who's crazy?"

"You are!"

Rogers strikes an attitude and gets ready for fisticuffs. "Take that back, or I'll make you," he shouts, closing on his antagonist. A strong hand, however, grasps him firmly by the shoulder.

"Play football!" says Captain Dobson quietly.

Rogers obediently rolls down his sleeves, the umpire decides that the tackling was fair, and the game goes on.

The college boys play hard to get the ball and send it back to the centre of the field, but a surprise is in store for them. The ball is well to the side of the goal posts and is in the hands of the villagers. It is snapped back and passed quickly to the half-back who rushes on a straight line to the center. Dobson and Powers are after him, and are just about to pounce upon him, when suddenly he drops the ball, and by a wonderful "scratch" kick he sends the "leather" straight between the goal posts.

A shout of joy bursts from the ranks of the villagers, but the college boys are dumb. The thing was so unexpected that even Dobson, ordinarily cool and self-possessed, has lost a little of his sang-froid.

One goal to one touch-down in favor of the villagers! Some brilliant playing must be done or the day is lost.

The villagers now have the kick-off. Captain Dobson marshals his men together, and gives them a few hurried instructions. The ball is put into play by a long high kick

by the villager who made the goal. Frank King, than whom there is no swifter runner on the college team, makes at once for it and captures it. As soon as he finds it snugly under his arm, he starts helter-skelter down the field, followed by the college boys cheering wildly. The cheer is a tonic to Frank. It is his first chance to make a good play and he is bound that nothing shall stop him. The first villager that tackles him is thrown off, and sent to measure his length on the grass. The next two are dodged so neatly that the spectators break out into a loud cheer. Six men are thus passed by and it would seem as if Frank was about to do the impossible and score a touch-down. But a brawny villager meets Frank squarely and down the smaller boy goes with a crash, holding to the ball, however, as if his life depended upon it.

Captain Dobson comes running up shouting, "Well done, King! when you know the game better, you'll beat us all."

Frank rises and hands over the ball to the snap-back, his dancing eyes showing his enjoyment at the captain's compliment.

"Now for a touch-down!" cries Dobson; "nothing can stop us."

But as soon as the ball is snapped the villagers break the college rush line and pounce upon the half-back. The half-back staggers and the ball falls from his hands, and is caught up by one of the villagers. In a few moments it is deep in the field again, and the touch-down that was to follow Frank's brilliant run is as far away as

ever. For another quarter of an hour the game is hot, and the advantage is first with one side and then with the other. Ten minutes more and time will be called, and it looks as if victory will perch on the banners of the visiting team !

Dobson marshals his forces together and gives a few hurried instructions to Powers. Powers nods knowingly, and the ball is again put into play. As soon as it reaches Powers, who is half-back, he tucks it snugly under his arm and starts on a run, Dobson keeping just in front of him as a protector. The fierce look of an angry Kentucky colonel is in the captain's eye. Down the campus he sails, tossing the villagers right and left, Powers following him. Twenty feet from the goal and they are still running on, with only two more villagers to pass. Dobson hurls the first one to the earth but the other by a quick dodge captures Powers and down they go. A grand rush, everybody admits, and worthy of being crowned with a touch-down.

The teams are again quickly lined up. The snap-back makes ready to pass the ball, but while the villagers are expecting this, he plunges forward and before he is stopped he has gained five feet.

"Now for a touch-down !" Dobson cries. "We are less than ten feet from the goal !"

The ball is again ready for play. The snap-back releases it to the quarter-back, but unfortunately, there is "something rotten in the state of Denmark !"

The rush line of the college team is weak, and the villagers have noticed this and made the most of it. Just as the

quarter-back receives the ball, he is thrown violently to the ground and the ball slips from his hands.

A cry of despair escapes from Dobson. So near and yet so far ! The great chance is lost ! The villager who overthrew the quarter-back makes for the ball, which has fallen several feet away, but his foot slips and down he goes. In a moment Frank King is upon the "leather" and snaps it up. A villager rushes at him, but Frank gets between the enemy's legs, and the villager is tossed on his head, Dobson, Rogers, and Powers meanwhile crowding around Frank.

"Rush him in !" cries Dobson. Both teams pile upon Frank, who crawls along the ground between a dozen legs bunched together. The wild palpitating mass sways to and fro for a few moments, when suddenly the voice of Dobson is heard shouting, "Touch-down ! touch-down !"

The umpire appears; the indiscriminate mass is dissolved and underneath it Frank is discovered holding the ball tenaciously and feeling pretty much as if he had been put through a clothes-wringer.

"How are you, King ?" Dobson asks.

"I guess I'm all right," Frank faintly responds.

"As soon as you get your breath back you'll feel better," says the captain by way of consolation, and Frank patiently waits for his breath to return.

"Only two minutes before time will be called !" the umpire shouts.

Dobson carries the ball out on a straight line from the spot where the touch-down was made. It is not an easy goal to score, as the wind is blowing and the point from

which the ball must be kicked is at the side of the goal-post. Dobson hands the ball to Rogers. Rogers throws himself full length on the ground pointing the ball with a nicety, so that Dobson may have every advantage.

The boys on both teams hold their breath. Dobson makes a rush, Rogers frees the ball and it goes sailing high in the air—higher than Dobson intended it should. The wind plays with it for a moment and then it falls just inside the goal-posts. The college boys are victors! A wild shout follows, and Frank's first match game of football is over. Our hero is sore from head to foot, but his joy is complete.

CHAPTER X.

*THE WALK UP THE MOUNTAIN.—THE CIDER-MILL.—THE DIS-
APPEARANCE OF FRANK.—THE RETURN OF THE BOYS
TO THE COLLEGE.—NO NEWS.—DOBSON'S RIDE.*

It was a time-honored custom at the college for all the boys to go on a long walk up the mountains some day in the autumn. The prospective point was five miles away to an old cider-mill. Here the boys would drink the sweet cider until they were almost bursting, and fill in the interstices with home-made bread which a farmer's wife provided. No mention was ever made of pay for what was received. A collection was taken up among the boys, and the money was given to the owner of the cider-mill.

As this custom of a voluntary offering had prevailed for a number of years and the farmer had never objected, it is only fair to suppose that he considered himself well paid for his merchandise.

Thursday was the regular college holiday, and the Thursday in the middle of October was the day chosen for the annual walk. The boys were always allowed a half-hour's sleep over on Thursday morning, which was a most welcome privilege. After prayers were said, instead of being marshalled to the study hall the students went to the

chapel to attend Mass, which was followed by breakfast. Breakfast over the small boys gathered about the prefect's office, and each one received twenty-five cents—his weekly allowance of pocket money. Not a very large sum, perhaps, but a great boon to a boy who had not one copper to rub against its fellow.

The day for the long walk was one of those bracing days that come in the country in the month of October. The leaves on the trees had turned from green to yellow, gold, and red, and the mountains were flaming and flashing with autumnal colors. The first hoarfrost silvered the fields and the wind played with the fallen leaves along the roadside. There was just the hint of winter and decay abroad, but the bright sunshine helped greatly to dispel the sadness which so often wraps itself about an autumn day.

It was after dinner that the boys were assembled together, and the walk began. The small boys led the way, and a noisy crowd they were, shouting at the farmers in the fields and making the village ring with their college cries and songs. To Frank the whole thing was as a happy dream. He felt like the little boy who for the first time climbed a hill near where he lived, and having got a view of a large expanse of country, hurried back to his mother and said in great excitement: "Mother, I've seen the world, and it's very large!" Frank had lived all his life in a crowded city with seldom a chance to get out of it. The freedom of the country, with its broad fields and high mountains, was therefore a new experience for him.

After two hours' good stiff climbing the prefect and his charges reached the end of their journey, and met a warm

welcome from the farmer and his wife. All kinds of glasses were fast filled with the sweet cider, and two big trays of buttered bread were laid before the boys, who sat down, hungry and thirsty, to gorge themselves. When the meal was over the younger lads strolled about in the woods. There were chestnut trees in abundance, and the boys ate and filled their pockets with the nuts—most indigestible food the college doctor used to say—but the boys could never see it.

The whole thing being new to Frank he ran about looking for fresh woods and "pastures new." Bent on a voyage of discovery he climbed a hill a little distance away from where his companions were, and disappeared behind it. A little later the sun began to sink in the heavens, and the prefect, looking at his watch, proclaimed that it was after four o'clock, and time to start back to the college. The boys formed in line, Harry Powers, as usual, seeking out Frank for a companion. To his surprise Frank was nowhere to be found, a fact which Harry then made known to the prefect.

"He should have remained with us," the prefect said impatiently, "and not cause this delay."

Harry, with several other boys, scouted the adjacent woods for a quarter of an hour, but returned without the missing boy. The prefect then began to be a little uneasy. He divided off the boys in relays of three and four, and sent them through the woods in every direction. For a half mile the mountain re-echoed with cries for Frank, but at the end of a half-hour's search the boys returned without any knowledge of their comrade.

"Perhaps he went back to the college alone," one boy suggested.

"He had no permission to do that," the prefect said sharply, a nervous look in his eyes showing that he was a little concerned about Frank.

"He wouldn't go back alone," Harry Powers spoke up; "this is his first trip up the mountain, and he couldn't find the way home through the woods."

The prefect thought for a time, his blanched face showing that the affair had for him a serious aspect. After a little he said: "I want you all to start back home, while I remain here. If Frank has returned to the college let them send a messenger to tell me so. I suppose I can trust you to return immediately, and not loiter on the way or go into any stores in the village?"

"Yes, sir," said Dobson, stepping up and touching his cap, "I'll be responsible for the band, and we'll make good time in getting to the college."

"Well, start off now and send me back good news."

"Yes, sir, we hope we will," the boys shouted in chorus, and then disappeared down the mountain road.

The prefect held a consultation with the farmer and his wife as to what might have happened to the missing boy, and what was the cause of his not appearing.

"Waal, it's purty hard to tell," the farmer said, stroking his short, stubby beard, which was as stiff as a paint-brush. "Boys are mischievous and they keep a man a guessin'."

"P'raps it might be the gypsies that's took him," the wife suggested.

"Waal, there be somethin' in that," the farmer ad-

mitted, "but the gypsies left these parts mor'n twenty-four hours ago, so I reckon they ain't responsible."

After discussing the matter for some time, the prefect started out himself on a scout through the mountains.

The sun set behind a bank of pink-tipped clouds, and the chill night came on quickly. An owl cried from a tree-top and the cold wind sighed dismally down the side of the mountain and through the thick woods. The farmer and his wife had finished their evening chores and were at supper when the prefect came back footsore and weary, without any news of the missing boy.

In the meantime the boys had returned to the college, and found, as they expected they would, that Frank had not come home before them. His loss was immediately made known to Mr. Livingstone, who in turn communicated it to the President. The news spread like wild-fire, and soon the whole college was in a high state of excitement. A hurried council was held, and it was decided to send up the mountain a searching-party composed of the larger boys under the care of several prefects.

Dobson made a suggestion which he was allowed to act upon. In the stable there was a horse that was sometimes used in the saddle. Dobson came from Kentucky and had been riding horses from the time he was six years old. He was given permission to saddle the horse and make his way up the mountain to the prefect, who was there keeping guard, to let him know that there was no news of Frank King and that a searching-party was about to start for the mountains. In a moment the horse was saddled and Dobson was on its back. A cheer went up from the assembled

boys; and Dobson, proud as Paul Revere, with a wave of his hand sent the horse at a flying gait along the road. On he sped through the village, pausing only to let the night express for New York dash ahead of him. The village people had heard that a college boy had been lost, and Dobson's haste helped to stir the latent excitement. A short time after, when the searching-party of college boys passed through the village, a number of the villagers joined it. The news spread everywhere, disturbing the normal quiet of the settlement.

Up the mountain Dobson urged his horse, bidding the farmers coming from work to keep out of his way, and flinging on all sides the news of the lost boy. Now he hung low over the horse's head and spoke gently to it, urging it along a clear stretch of moonlit road; again he sat back in the saddle, as the horse mounted a steep incline and flicked his whip at the overhanging branches of the trees.

"Hello!" exclaimed the farmer who owned the cider-mill, breaking off in the middle of a sentence.

The prefect looked up at him for an explanation.

"I reckon I hear the sound of a horse's hoofs comin' along this way."

The prefect listened and thought he could detect the same thing.

"Must be somethin' 'bout that ere boy of yourn. Nobody rides up the mountain this time o' night, leastwise they don't ride horseback and at that gait, I'll allow."

The sound of the horse's hoofs on the hard road was now

very pronounced and clear. The prefect rose from his seat and went closer to the turnpike.

Nearer and nearer came the metallic ring of the horse's shoes. The rider was evidently coming along at break-neck speed.

"It must be news for me," the prefect reasoned to himself. He was right in his conjecture, as the next moment Dobson came flying around a turn in the road and brought his horse to a halt, saluting the prefect with the dignity of a Kentucky colonel.

"Well, what news?" the prefect inquired.

"Not very good news, sir. Frank did not return, and the President is sending a searching-party to join you."

The prefect shook his head. The affair had become a serious matter.

Dobson attended to his horse and put it away in the stable. Before he had finished the supper which the farmer's wife had prepared for him, black clouds rolled over the tops of the mountains, enveloping the moon, and leaving the woods in utter darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXCITEMENT AT THE COLLEGE.—THE SEARCHING-PARTY.— NO TIDINGS.—DETECTIVE HICKEY.—MR. JACOBS.

SUPPER at the college was a half-hour earlier than usual. The excitement among the boys was at a high pitch, and very little eating was done in the refectory that night. When the meal was ended the President tapped a bell and silence followed.

"This afternoon," the President began very slowly, "one of your companions strayed away from the other boys with whom he had gone out walking; when the time came for all to return Francis King was missing, and we have had no tidings of him as yet. It is most probable that he strayed away and has been lost in the mountains. In order that he may be rescued and not spend the long night there, Mr. Livingstone will organize a party of twenty of the larger boys, which will go in search of the little lad who has been lost. I trust in God they will bring him back safely to us."

Grace was said by the President, when he had finished speaking, and the boys adjourned to the play room. Of course all wanted to go on the searching expedition, but the President had limited the number to twenty, and only twenty were allowed to leave the college grounds.

Harry Powers and Rogers used all kinds of persuasive

arguments to prove how valuable their assistance would be, but they were told that the searching-party would be made up only of large boys. A half dozen lanterns were then distributed among the boys who were to go up the mountain, and they left the college amid the cheers of the rest of the students.

When they had departed the bell rang, and the students were assembled in the study hall, an unusual proceeding so early in the evening. The explanation of this soon came. They were to go in a body to the chapel to pray that no harm might come to Frank.

After the prayers in the chapel were finished, recreation was announced until bedtime, as anything like study that evening was out of the question. All kinds of theories as to what might have happened to Frank were advanced, the one that gained the most favor among the small boys being that he was devoured by a bear. The farmer who owned the cider-mill had stated that afternoon that two hunters had the day before fired at a bear not far from the place where Frank had disappeared.

The searching-party passed through the village on the way to the mountains. A dozen of the villagers provided with lanterns were ready to meet them and go with them. The excitement in the village was almost as great as at the college. Little ever happened to disturb the even tenor of life in the place, and nothing so important as the present cause of excitement had occurred for many a day.

By the time the boys reached the top of the mountain where the prefect and Dobson were waiting, the woods were black and the rain was falling heavily. Nothing

daunted, however, they broke up into parties of four, and started through the woods in different directions. On they walked, calling out for Frank at intervals of every half minute. The rain pattered through the trees, and the sound of their voices came back to them mockingly from the surrounding hills, but there were no tidings of the missing boy. At midnight the prefect sent three of his party back to the college to report that two miles of the woods had been searched and as yet there was no news. When the boys arrived at the college, the President came out on the porch to greet them, and they told him of what they had done, and their failure to obtain any knowledge of Frank's whereabouts.

On their arrival in the dormitory they found all awake and sitting up in bed eager to hear the news. The prefect walked along the aisle between the beds, but did not attempt to enforce the rule of silence. Small boys, who were usually in the land of nod at a little after eight o'clock, were as wide awake as if it were midday, and not after midnight. When the boys heard that there was still no tidings of Frank, a hubbub began again, all discussing the different "accidents by flood and field" that might have happened to their lost comrade.

Later in the night, or rather near morning, several others of the party which had gone up the mountain arrived at the college. Notwithstanding the rain and the cold and dreariness of the woods, the search had been kept up. Five miles of the woods in all directions had been scoured with no result. At length morning broke, and the different members of the searching party came back to the

farmer's house from whence they had started, cold, wet, and disappointed. The farmer's wife had hot coffee and home-made bread ready for them, which they found very grateful after their long night's work. One of the prefects remained on the scene, all the others going back; the villagers to their homes, the boys to the college, where they reported their failure to find any information of the lost boy.

A holiday was proclaimed that day on account of the excitement, and very welcome it was, too, as none of the boys had slept during the night. The President held several conferences with Mr. Livingstone, and the nervous look in his eyes showed how worried he was over Frank's disappearance. He finally concluded that any further delay might be fatal. Evidently the boy was not lost in the mountains. What, then, could have happened to him? That was the question. The President determined to lay all speculation aside and seek professional advice in the matter. From a drawer in his desk he took a book of blanks on which telegraphic messages are sent, and tearing off one of the blanks he wrote a few words on it, and then rang for a messenger.

"Take this to the village immediately and have it sent."

The written message was a short one. It said: "Can you come out to see me this morning?" The address to which it was directed read:

Detective Hickey,
Police Headquarters,
Mulberry St.,
New York City.

In less than two hours a large, powerfully built man jumped lightly from a carriage in front of the college, and ascending the steps, rang the bell. Hardly had his hand touched the bell than the door was opened by the President himself. After they had greeted each other, the President said : " I am very grateful to you, Detective, for coming here so promptly, for I am much worried."

" Some one open your safe ? " the detective asked.

" No, nothing like that. In fact, it's hardly in your line. A boy went up the mountains yesterday afternoon on a walk with some others, and strayed away, and though we have had the mountains searched for miles, we have not been able to get any news of him."

" That's a pity," the big man said tenderly, thinking of a little boy of his own at home, whom he would not care to have spend a night alone in the mountains. " I hope nothing serious has happened to him."

" That's what we are beginning to fear, and I am anxious to know the truth as soon as possible. I would like to make another effort to find him before sending word to his mother. He is her only boy, and it will go hard with her to hear bad news about him."

" It is sad," the detective said, nodding. " Any gypsies been around lately ? They used to come through this village when I was a lad and lived here."

" Yes, a party of gypsies passed over the mountains the day before yesterday, but they were far from the place where the boy disappeared."

" Could you let me have a description of the little fel-

low ?" the detective asked, taking a note-book and pencil from his pocket.

"His name," the President answered, "is Francis King. He is twelve years of age, and he has bright blue eyes and brown hair. He wore, at the time of his disappearance, a black velvet suit, black stockings, yellow shoes, and a baseball cap."

The detective wrote this information rapidly. "Is that all ?" he asked.

"That's all."

"Well, it's enough."

"Perhaps I should have mentioned that he had with him at the time a gold watch."

"A gold watch," the detective repeated, while a low whistle escaped him.

"Yes, one that belonged to his dead father."

The detective made a note of this fact.

"I guess that's where the trouble lies."

"How ?" the President asked.

"Well, if the boy has been stolen it's because of the watch."

"Do you think that would explain his disappearance ?"

"Most certainly. It is the only clue we have, and I am going to work on it." He took a railroad time-table from his pocket and consulting it for a moment, said, "I can make good connections for Paterson if I start immediately, so you will excuse me."

"Paterson ?" the President asked, in surprise.

"Yes. You see, if the boy was stolen for the sake of the

watch, then it is likely that the man who stole him will try to pawn the watch at the first large town to which he comes. Now, Paterson is about the only place across the mountains where he could do that safely; so I go to Paterson for information."

"It's singular," the President said, somewhat doubtfully, "but I would never have thought of that."

The detective smiled. "Every man to his own business. I'm doing the only thing that appears reasonable to me, and if I am mistaken it will not be the first time."

With this act of humility the shrewdest of New York detectives stepped into the carriage, bit the end off a cigar, and told the driver to hurry his horses so as to catch the eleven-forty train. When he was comfortably seated he took a book from his pocket and ran over its pages hurriedly. "Ah!" he exclaimed, breaking out into a laugh; "my old friend, Mr. Jacobs—the original Mr. Jacobs." He was looking at a list of the names of the pawnbrokers in the principal towns adjacent to New York City, and discovered that an old friend kept his stand in Paterson.

"It will be strange," he murmured to himself, "if my 'goot frien', Mr. Jacobs, cannot help me out."

He reached the station just in time to board the train. An hour later he was walking the streets of Paterson. A hundred feet off one of the principal thoroughfares his eye caught three golden balls ostentatiously swinging in the breeze. Coming up to them he entered a small store to which they were an index of the business done within.

"Hello, Jacobs!" the detective cried, in a cheery tone.

A little old man who was examining a diamond with a jeweller's glass looked up at the salutation. For an instant he was dumbfounded, and his wrinkled face grew ashen. The next moment, however, he gained control of himself, and taking the glass from his eye, came forward with a forced laugh, saying, "Oh, Detective! How glad I was to see you already."

The detective took the outstretched hand, answering, "Well, old man, I don't think you'll ever die, or ever give up the pawnbroker business."

"Die!" the little old man exclaimed, in pretended horror. "Vy should I die, or vy should I give up my business? Dat's a goot business, ain'd it?"

"Sure! You've made a pile out of it."

"Oh, no, Detective, how could you say dat? I was a poor man."

The detective laughed.

"Oh, you yust the same. You always make plenty jokes. But say, vad brings you out here from New York?"

The little old man was uneasy, and wanted information.

The smile left the detective's face. "I'm here on a serious piece of business, Jacobs, and I expect you to help me."

"Me to help you?" the old man asked in apparent surprise.

"Yes, exactly. A small boy has been stolen, and I want to find him."

A relieved look came into the Hebrew's face. He knew he had given out no pawn-tickets on a small boy.

"The little fellow was stolen yesterday," the detective

went on to explain. "He had in his possession a handsome gold watch, and that's what I am looking for. Have you got it?"

"Me?" the old man exclaimed, in a tone which was meant to convey that he felt insulted.

"No bunkum, Jacobs," the detective said sternly; "I want to know if that watch has been left here."

The old man threw up both hands as a sign that he was speaking the truth. "Say, as sure as my name's Jacobs, I don't know vat a vatch looks like. I have not got vun in a week. Dis is the slowest town you ever struck."

The detective was convinced that the old man was speaking the truth. He was rather disappointed that his calculations had miscarried. However, as he himself had acknowledged, it was not the first time he had failed.

"Well, see here, Jacobs," the detective said, "the man who took that watch may come here to pawn it. If he does I want you to send me a telegram immediately. Here's a quarter," he continued, throwing the price of the dispatch on the counter. The pawnbroker lost no time in taking the money and putting it away safely in his pocket.

"Straight business, Jacobs, or you'll be sorry for it," the detective said sternly.

"Straight business!" the old man exclaimed in pretended horror, "ven did you ever find me doing anything else?"

The detective could not refrain from smiling. "You're no saint, Jacobs."

"No, I know dat. All de saints in my religion is dead. Ve ain't got none now."

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“No, they are all *profits* these days.”

The little old man smiled and shrugged his shoulders saying, “business is business.”

The detective reached his hand across the counter. “Good-by, Jacobs, and don’t fail to let me know if you get any information about the watch. I’m going across the way to that hotel opposite for my dinner, and I’ll leave on the two o’clock train.”

The little man followed him to the door and bowed him out. Then smiling to himself, he murmured : “Vell, dat’s vun dime he didn’t score on me.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE PAWNBROKER GETS A CLUE.—THE EXPLANATION OF THE MYSTERY.—THE CAVE IN THE MOUNTAINS.—FRANK IS FOUND.—HOME AGAIN.—A HAPPY DETECTIVE.

THE detective entered the hotel, and sat down to dinner. He was a little chagrined at his failure to get the information he was looking for, but as disappointments were a part of his trade, he did not let the present one interfere with his appetite. He ate a good meal, and was just throwing his napkin on the table when a waiter stepped up to him and said, "I beg pardon, sir, but is your name Mr. Hickey?"

The detective looked up in surprise and admitted that that was his name.

"Well, sir, there is a boy outside wants to see you,—in a great hurry."

The detective paid his bill, tipped the waiter, a thing the latter was not accustomed to in that hotel, and went to the door.

"Mr. Jacobs wants you right away," the boy said.

The detective hurried across the street to the pawnbroker's shop. A rough looking individual, whose general appearance would indicate nights spent under starry skies, was standing at a counter, on the opposite side of which Mr. Jacobs was curiously examining a gold watch.

"I can'd let you haf more dan fifty tollars on dat vatch," the old man was saying when the detective entered.

"Ah, my goot frien', Mr. Hickey ! I'm so glad to see you. Please look at dis vatch und dell dis gentleman if I can gif him more dan fifty tollars."

The detective took the watch carelessly, glanced at the inside of the back case which was open, and there read "Frederick King," the name of Frank's father. A satisfied look came into his eyes. He had not failed after all. He closed the watch carefully, put it in his vest pocket, and placing his hand on the shoulder of the rough looking customer at his side, he said quietly, "You're my prisoner."

The man was dumbfounded. He looked first at the detective and then at the pawnbroker.

"What kind of a game is this ?" he angrily exclaimed.

"You're my prisoner," the detective repeated, flicking his coat aside and showing a small silver badge attached to his vest. The man instantly whipped out a long knife from his pocket, crying at the same time, "You'll never take me alive !"

The officer, at the sight of the knife, drew a silver-tipped revolver from his trousers pocket. Holding it at his side he said with a sneer : "Then I'll take you dead."

There was a pause for a moment, and the detective's anger got the better of him. He did not fancy theatrical scenes.

"Put down that knife on the counter or I'll blow your head off," he exclaimed, his eyes angrily flashing. The man was completely cowed and did as he was bidden. The

detective put his pistol back in his pocket and extracted a small club from the sleeve of his coat.

"For two pins I'd let you have this over the head," he said, advancing and taking hold of his prisoner. "What have you done with the boy?" he asked, giving him a shake that almost threw him off his feet.

"What boy?" the man asked, in feigned surprise.

"The boy you took this watch from. Tell me where he is or I'll knock the head off you." The officer brought his club in front of the tramp's face and gave him another shaking up.

The man weakened immediately. "Don't hit me and I'll tell you everything," he whined.

The detective lowered his club and listened to the story. When it was finished he sent Mr. Jacobs' boy across the street to the hotel to call up on the telephone the chief of police of the town. "Tell him Hickey, Police Headquarters, New York, wants him right away." In a few moments the chief of police came hurriedly into the pawnbroker's establishment.

"Hello, Detective, what's up?" he asked, grasping his fellow-officer's hand.

"A 'Charley Ross' affair on a small scale," the detective answered, smiling.

The case was then explained to the chief of police and in a few moments the officers agreed on a plan to rescue the stolen boy. Before disclosing this plan it may be well to return to the subject of this story.

When Frank had descended the other side of the hill which separated him from his companions, he was sud-

denly confronted by two villainous-looking men, who came from behind a huge boulder, which had hidden them from Frank's gaze as he stood on the top of the hill. At the sight of them he started to run, but one of them was too quick for him, and intercepted his way.

"Well, young 'un, what brings you here?"

"Oh, please let me go," said Frank. "My friends are on the other side."

"And who are your friends?"

"A whole lot of college boys. We are out taking a walk."

"You have care of him for a moment, Bill," Frank's captor said to his companion, "while I get a look at the others."

The man hastily made his way up the hill to reconnoitre. He saw the great number of boys, some of whom were fast becoming young men, and he knew that there was not much time to lose. He therefore hurried back again, exclaiming, "There's a whole crew of them, Bill, and we had better lose no time. How much money have you got, youngster?" he asked, turning to Frank.

"Oh, let me go!" cried Frank, trying to break away.

"No use doing that," his captor advised.

Frank then tried to shout. He did not succeed in doing this, as a huge hand over his mouth silenced him.

"Go through his pockets, Bill, while I hold him."

This decision thoroughly frightened Frank.

"Oh!" he said to himself, in his simplicity, "if only Harry Powers was here with his pistol."

The tramps quickly rifled his pockets, and found two dollars and some small change. They were about to desist when one of them happened to touch the upper part of Frank's vest, and his hand struck something hard. Putting his fingers into the upper vest pocket he pulled out a shining gold watch.

"Say!" he exclaimed with delight, "this is a find for fair."

Frank burst into tears when he saw his watch taken from him.

"Oh, please don't take that," he pleaded. "It belonged to my father, who is dead."

"Well, if he's dead he has no use for it," the man said, heartlessly joking.

The two tramps held a council for a moment. If they let Frank go, he would tell his companions and the next instant the woods would be alive with the boys in hot pursuit. The only safe thing to do was to take the boy with them, and this they agreed on.

"Come along, youngster," one said, catching him by the arm.

"No, I don't want to," cried Frank, drawing back. The other tramp took hold of the frightened boy, and regardless of the brambles and bushes which blocked the way, his captors rushed along swiftly. For fully half an hour they kept on at this rapid pace, never pausing until they were three miles away from the hill at the foot of which Frank had fallen into their power. When finally they did come to a halt, Frank, whose face and hands had been badly lacerated on the long run through the thick bush,

grew weak and fainted. One of his captors forced his mouth open, and poured some liquor from a flask down his throat. After they had rested for ten minutes and Frank had gained a little strength, they started again on their journey.

"We'll make for the cave over the second mountain," one said to the other.

It was almost an hour before they reached their destination, which was a small natural cave in the side of the mountain. As soon as they arrived there Frank sank exhausted on the soft damp earth of the cave. The tramps were now at leisure to look the watch over carefully, and after a thorough examination they pronounced it the finest they had ever been able to steal. Evening came on, and the tramps made their supper off a can of stewed tomatoes, and some hard tack which they had stowed away in the cave on a former visit. Frank was invited to join them, but refused, as he was in no humor to eat.

"Don't be afraid, young 'un ; step over here and have your share. We'll treat you well. You're the goose with the golden egg. To-morrow we'll send you home all right."

This news had a good effect on Frank, and when later on he was again invited to eat something, he consented and made a good meal off the hard tack and the stewed tomatoes, which one of his captors was considerate enough to warm up for him.

To be assured his life was not in danger was a relief to Frank. He regretted the loss of the watch, but his mind was at ease and he stretched himself on an old strip of car-

pet which was provided for him, and slept on till the sun had risen.

When he awoke to a sense of his surroundings he saw that both tramps were sleeping, and making the cave resound with their powerful snoring. The idea came into Frank's mind that now would be the time to escape. He rolled over from where he slept to the side of the cave, and began crawling towards the opening, on his hands and knees. He had nearly reached the mouth of the cave when unfortunately his hand struck the empty tomato-can and made it rattle.

The noise awakened one of the tramps, who looked around and discovered the boy.

"Say, youngster, what brought you over there? Rolling about in your sleep?"

Frank was too frightened to answer, so he remained perfectly still.

"I wonder what time it is by my gold watch," the tramp said, facetiously, as he took the watch from his vest, which was under his head. "Eight o'clock! That run yesterday tired us out."

He called his companion, who awoke very slowly and did not seem to regret the fact that it was so late.

"God bless the man who first invented sleep. Isn't that so, young 'un?"

Frank, who had now risen, made no reply. He thought to make his escape, and having failed his spirits drooped again.

The tramps got up, and made their morning toilet in a little stream near-by, in which action Frank imitated

them. Then one of them produced a fishing-rod from the cave, and after a half-hour's fishing succeeded in catching several brook trout, which made a toothsome breakfast, with the hard tack, and clear cold water from a mountain spring. After breakfast was over a consultation was held and it was agreed that one should go to the town, which was four miles away, and pawn the watch, while the other would take care of Frank. As soon as the first tramp would return with the money received on the watch, Frank was to be set free and his captors were to depart to other regions.

* * * * *

We have already seen how their plan miscarried. When the chief of police had joined the New York detective, it took them but a short time to come to an agreement. A carriage was ordered and the two officers, together with their prisoner, entered it. The carriage drove hurriedly through the town, and then over a lonely road into the mountains. When they had come to a spot near where the cave was, the detective exchanged his coat and hat for the shabby coat and hat worn by his prisoner. He then made his way stealthily through the bush, until he suddenly confronted a man who he was sure was the one he was looking for.

"Did you see a small boy around here?" the officer asked.

Frank was lying a short distance away in the grass and the detective did not notice him.

"Why, what's that your business?" the tramp answered.

Frank, hearing the voices, jumped up, and the officer recognized the black velvet suit. All the anger of a father for his own lost boy rose in the detective's heart.

"What's that my business?" he asked, repeating the question. The next instant he let go one of his hands and the tramp measured his length on the ground.

"Get up from there, you cur, so that I can knock you down again," he said, boiling with rage. But the tramp had seen the half concealed badge on the detective's vest, and he knew that his little game was up; the next moment Frank ran over and threw himself on the detective's breast, sobbing. Tears stood in the big man's eyes as he spoke comforting words to the lad, and assured him that he would be back at the college safely before supper-time.

The tramp was quickly bundled into the carriage to join his friend, and the officers, with Frank sitting between them, drove back to the town, where the thieves were placed in prison cells.

Then a dispatch flashed over the wire to the President of the college. "Boy found. Coming on 5.30 train. Hickey."

Frank, having first eaten a hearty dinner, boarded the train with the detective. The news spread from the college to the village, and when the train arrived Frank found two hundred people waiting to welcome him as a hero. The ovation he received at the college can be better imagined than described. The bell was tolled in honor of his safe return, and one of the boys, who was a good cornet player, played "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

When the excitement was over the detective took his departure amid the cheers of the boys.

"This has been to me," he remarked to the President, "about the pleasantest little experience I have ever had. It beats bagging bank-burglars every time."

CHAPTER XIII.

**BEATRICE'S LONESOMENESS.—THE LETTER TO HER BROTHER.—
MADISON SQUARE PARK.—THE CONFESSION.—MAN'S IN-
HUMANITY TO WOMAN.—A CASE OF INDIGNATION.**

No message had been sent Mrs. King in reference to the misadventure of her boy. It was deemed prudent not to let her know anything until there was definite information. She heard of the occurrence later, as the affair got into the newspapers. Frank had to go several times to Pater-son to give his evidence before the court where the two tramps were tried. A case of child-stealing was made out against them and they were railroaded to prison for ten years.

When the excitement consequent on Frank's return had subsided, his life went on smoothly and pleasantly. Every day he grew fonder of the college and of the boys, whom he found manly and honest, Jordan and one or two like him to the contrary notwithstanding. It was different with his younger sister at home. She began to find life without her brother unbearable, and often wished that some favorable wind would waft him home again.

"If only he would get into trouble, and a bad report of him be sent home, what a blessing that would be," she rea-soned.

One day, when her mind had been dwelling more than usual on this matter, she happened to get sight of her mother looking sadly at a photograph of Frank. On the instant Beatrice made up her mind that it was time to act :

“To take up arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them.”

It had been a happy household before carking care in the shape of an “old uncle” appeared on the scene. Since the time he sent forth the edict that Frank was to go to college, all had been unhappiness. Evidently the only thing to do was to get Frank home again.

“Mamma once satisfied Frank that when she wept it was for joy,” Beatrice said to herself, “but she cannot convince me of that. When I weep it is because I have a heartache. It must be so with my mother.”

With Beatrice to think was to act. That evening when she was supposed to be quietly doing her lessons, she was writing a letter to her brother, which would, in her reckoning, end the whole miserable affair and bring back sunshine into three lives where now the deepest gloom predominated. When she had finished her letter she put it into an envelope, and having sealed it, hid it in one of her books. The next morning on her way to school she invested two cents—all the money she had in the world—in a stamp and mailed the letter—and this is what the letter said :

“MY DEAREST, DARLING FRANK :

“Don’t be overcome by so much affection or think I don’t mean it. I never knew before *how much* I loved you.

I take back all the nasty things I ever said to you. Oh, *how lonesome* I have been since you left. Mamma is just as bad. She bursts into tears at the sight of your photograph ! I know it's wrong to wish harm to any one, but I can tell you my patience is nearly exhausted in trying not to wish we never had an uncle. I can't bear the sight of his picture in the parlor. I'd like to turn it to the wall. The other evening mamma and I were reciting the litany together. When we came to the part, 'From all evil, deliver us, O Lord,' I said under my breath, 'From all uncles, deliver us, O Lord.' I was sorry afterwards, because I know it's not proper to add anything to the litany that isn't there, but still it's hard sometimes to restrain one's feelings. If there is an unhappy girl from the Battery to Harlem River, it's me. Perhaps I should say it is I. From the way I feel I think *it's both*. Now, I have had enough of worry and so has mamma, and I hope I know when I get enough. So this is what I propose. To-morrow after dinner you walk quietly down that side path along which there is a high hedge. Get on the safe side of the hedge, and run along it until you come to the road. If there is any one watching lie down in the ditch (you had better wear your old clothes). When the coast is clear make a dash for the village, and you will be in time for the three o'clock train. After you cross the ferry walk up Broadway and take the car there. Your ever-loving sister will be waiting for you at the upper end of Madison Square Park. Then we'll go quietly home and surprise mamma. She will smother you with kisses, and life will be once more worth living. Now don't make any mistakes and do just as I say. If you go making any plans of your own you'll spoil everything, as you usually do. I am sorry for saying those harsh things about Uncle George, because I know it's uncharitable, and mamma says he loves us. Funny way he shows his love by making us miserable ! Anyhow, I didn't say anything untrue about him, so that's one consolation. It's some kind of a virtue to speak the truth. Well, goodbye, and follow my directions. We'll have high jinks when you come home !!!

"Yours till to-morrow,

"TRIX."

"P. S. You say in your last letter you have a good friend named Harry Powers and that he loves his uncle, whom he calls a 'brick.' If Master Powers ever comes to see us I will treat him respectfully for your sake, but please don't expect me to like him. If he loves his uncle he must be a *funny boy*.

"Yours truly again,

"TRIX."

Beatrice spent that day in a state of nervous excitement. The letter arrived in the evening mail, and it was handed to Frank while he was in the middle of a heated argument over a game of football that had been played that afternoon. He read the letter hastily, and then stowed it away in his pocket and took up the argument again.

The next afternoon a small girl stood shivering at the upper end of Madison Square Park. The cold was so disagreeably penetrating that Broadway had few of its accustomed shoppers and strollers. Those whom business forced to be out hurried along with bowed heads, anxious to save their faces from the sharp sleet that was falling heavily on the city. It began to grow late, and the small girl, who was Beatrice, watched each car anxiously as it rolled along, to see if she could get a glimpse of him for whom she was so patiently waiting. The cold wind cut her face mercilessly and whistled sharply through the leafless limbs of the ice-covered trees. She ran around the park in the attempt to keep herself warm. One of the gray-coated policemen noticing her, stepped up to her and asked if she were lost. Oh, how she would have liked to have unburdened her mind to him ! but she was afraid. He represented the majesty of the law, and just at present she was

the encourager of the law's transgression. She satisfied him that she was not a "lost child" and he went his way. The lights began fitfully to appear in the shop windows on the opposite side of the street.

"It must be growing late," Beatrice reasoned. "Perhaps he missed the three o'clock train. I'll wait and see."

Just then a woman came along, and Beatrice noticed a gold chain dangling from her neck. The woman could tell her what time it was, which knowledge would to a certain extent relieve her suspense.

"Will you please tell me the time?" Beatrice asked timidly.

"I'm in too much of a hurry," the woman said, "and besides it's too cold to take out my watch."

Nothing but rebuffs for poor Beatrice! She tried to hold back the tears that were burning her eyes, but she was only partially successful. There came to her mind a sad song that she had often heard her mother sing:

"Out in the cold world, out in the street
Begging a penny from each one I meet."

She felt that the song applied to her. She took another run around the park by way of a distraction, keeping her eyes on the cars. The lights now shone brightly in all the shops. It certainly must be late! She saw a man coming towards her, who walked erect, and not very fast.

"Perhaps *he* won't find it too cold to look at his watch," she said to herself. "Would you please tell me the time, sir?" she asked.

"Certainly, my little maid," he answered, in a cheery tone. "It's just half past five."

Her faith in human nature revived a little. All human beings were not like the woman who found it too cold to take out her watch. Beatrice knew now that Frank had either disappointed her, or made a botch of the whole affair. She decided not to wait any longer as it was altogether too cold and dreary. She hurried home, where she found her mother anxiously awaiting her.

"Where have you been, child, all this time?" the worried mother said with tears in her voice. "I have been almost frightened to death lest some accident happened to you."

The look of anguish in her mother's eyes smote the heart of the guilty girl, and burying her head in her mother's breast she wept and told the story of her intrigue. The mother listened in amazement; then chided, and finally consoled her only daughter.

The morning mail brought to Beatrice a letter from Frank. She had slept well during the night, and was in a better state of mind to accept his excuses for not being able to put the plan she had proposed into operation. The following is Frank's apology:

"DEAR TRIX:

"I received your last letter and it *was* a good one. I didn't think you were such a chump! Why should I run away when I'm having a fine time at football, and getting ready for a big bonfire on Hallow-eve? I hope you enjoyed yourself in Madison Square Park. Never mind, Trix; you *mean* well. There's a good time coming. I'll be home for Christmas and you can be in the Park to meet me then. I made a touch-down and a goal in yesterday's football game. Say, Trix, I'd like awfully to have two dollars. I don't want to *ask* mamma for the money, *as* I asked her

for some the last time I wrote to her. If you would just hint the thing to mamma, perhaps she might send me the money. Do, now, like a good girl and I'll do you a favor some time. I've got to end this letter or I'll get plucked in Greek to-morrow. You ought to be glad you haven't got to study Greek. It's the most measly thing I ever struck. Well, good-by. Love to mamma and you.

"Your affectionate brother,

"FRANK."

When Beatrice finished the letter she threw it angrily at her feet. "He hopes I *enjoyed* myself in Madison Square Park! He thinks I *mean* well! I must be a *chump*! Nice word for a college boy to use! Perhaps I was a chump (whatever such a word can mean) to worry at all about him! Will I please hint to mamma to send him two dollars? He'll be as gray-headed as his uncle before he gets that two dollars!"

In this manner did she relieve herself after reading her brother's letter. There were no tears in her eyes now. She was furious with indignation. "I don't care if he never comes home!" she exclaimed, stamping her little foot on the floor. "I may have been a *chump* once; but—I—will—never—be—a—chump—again!"

CHAPTER XIV.

*THE WOODS IN AUTUMN.—PREPARATION FOR THE BONFIRE.—
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BISHOPS AND MONSIGNORS.—
THE CENTRE POLE.—HUNTING BIG GAME.—THE
MISERABLE ROGERS.—ALL'S WELL THAT
ENDS WELL.*

THE great event of the fall season at the college, if one excepts the principal football games with outside teams, was the Hallow-eve bonfire. The preparation for this fire consumed all the recreation time for at least a week. During this week the boys were allowed the unrestricted freedom of the woods for a mile or more. These indeed were glad October days. The woods were lit up with the last blaze of autumn, and the fallen leaves covered the ground like a floor of mosaics. Some days the sun would shine brightly, a few late stragglers of birds sing merrily in the tree-tops, and almost the gladness of spring would fill the air. Other days a great change would come over the face of nature, "a killing frost" nipping all this autumnal brightness. Great flocks of birds would sweep across the cloud-covered sky on their southern journey, the song in the woods be hushed, and only a tree-toad's trilling would break the monotonous quiet. From the fields the caw-caw

of the crows floated in, and the scarecrow, tattered and torn, stood like a sleeping sentinel limned against the sky.

"Nature was growing gray with months."

The first thing to be done in the preparation of the great fire was the getting of a centre pole. This would necessitate hunting through the woods to find a strong, straight tree, which would be a thing of beauty in itself. Tree after tree was examined. Some were high enough, but not strong looking. Others had the look of strength, but they were not queenly in appearance. So through the woods the boys would go, examining every tree with the critical eyes of connoisseurs, until they found the one tree that was deemed worthy to act the part of centre pole at the great bonfire.

It was a little over a week before Hallow-eve, and the decree had gone forth that it was time to prepare for the fire. Luckily a Bishop arrived at the college that same day. Of all visitors a Bishop was the most welcome. This was not on account of any particularly deep religious feeling, but because the advent of a Bishop meant a half-holiday. The taste of the boys was decidedly catholic. They made no distinction in regard to Bishops. The Bishop of New York was welcome, but so also would be the Bishop of Kamchatka. Once a Monsignor came on a friendly visit to the college, and his purple rabat peeping from under his coat was immediately noticed. The news of his arrival spread rapidly and a committee of three got ready to wait upon him. They were just about to start on their mission when a prefect met them.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"We are going to wait on the Bishop to ask him for a half-holiday," the spokesman of the committee replied.

"Well, you needn't trouble yourselves, for he's not a Bishop; he's only a Monsignor."

The committee returned to their expectant comrades.

"Did you get it?" was asked eagerly.

"No," the spokesman answered, "it wasn't a Bishop at all, it was a Monsignor."

Later the good man returned on a second visit to the college. The boys received him, of course, with every show of respect on account of his dignity. Their disappointment had by this time mellowed, and a sort of pitying feeling had taken its place. The verdict then was, "He's an awfully nice man, but he's not a Bishop; he's only a Monsignor!"

But to return to the bonfire. Mr. Livingstone came into the study hall just before dinner and amid a "vociferous silence," made this announcement.

"Bishop — has honored us with a visit, and also he has granted you a half-holiday." Great applause, which was quickly quelled. "I would suggest that all the boys go to the woods and begin preparations for the Hallow-eve fire."

After dinner the whole college assembled, gave three rousing cheers for the Bishop, and then broke away and dashed into the woods. Even those who were ill in the infirmary suddenly, like Richelieu when he felt the blood of a new France coursing through his veins, found themselves cured of their ailments.

Dobson, Rogers, Harry Powers, and Frank forged quickly to the front in the race through the woods.

"If you want to have fun," Harry imparted to Frank, "keep with Dobson. He knows the woods from stem to stern."

The boys broke up into groups, running hither and thither in their anxiety to find the one tree that would suit for a centre pole. The woods were traversed far and wide, till at last Dobson cried out to the "Committee on Trees," to come and examine a find of his.

Three of the large boys, it may be explained, were appointed to act as a committee in the matter of choosing a centre pole, and from their decision there was no appeal. The committee accepted Dobson's invitation and in a moment agreed unanimously that his was the finest tree they had yet seen.

The opinion of Mr. Livingstone, who just happened along, coincided with the verdict of the committee, and the next instant strong arms were swinging axes and the tall, queenly tree fell with a crash to the earth.

The centre pole having been chosen, Dobson and his friends wandered away in search of things of interest, making the quiet woods resound with their merry shouts. Chipmunks and gray squirrels, who were feasting on hickory nuts that had dropped from the trees, fled at the approach of the boys. Flying squirrels flashed through the air from the topmost branches, and muskrats dodged into their holes by the side of a sluggish stream, which was not over three feet wide, and which rejoiced in the name of the "Mississippi." Dobson communicated to his friends

that he had the day before set a trap for muskrats farther down the stream, and he was going to see if he had caught anything.

The boys hurried along, in their excitement tumbling over the half-hidden roots of trees, and soiling and tearing their clothes at every step.

"You've got a catch, Dobson!" cried Rogers, who was in the van.

Sure enough, a huge muskrat was struggling in the steel trap, which had snapped on one of its hind legs. Rogers quickly picked up a stone, shouting "I'll finish him off!"

"Let him alone, Rogers!" Dobson exclaimed angrily, at the same time pulling a small pistol from his hip pocket. From another pocket he took a box of bullets, and fitting one of them into the pistol he stretched himself on the soft earth at a sportsman's distance from the animal, and supporting the pistol on his arm, fired. The bullet struck the side of the muskrat's ear, letting the blood a little, and causing the animal to make a desperate attempt to free itself. The pistol was loaded again, and Dobson was just taking aim, when suddenly the muskrat made a last attempt to get away, and this time succeeded. With one bound it cleared the narrow stream, and made a dash for its home in the soft mud. What a pity to lose the prize after having trapped it! But wait. Dobson is a pretty cool hand with a pistol. He takes a quick aim at the flying animal, fires, and behold! the muskrat drops dead just as it is about to enter its hole.

"Bully for you, Dobson!" shouts the irrepressible Rog-

ers, making a rush to be the first one to handle the dead animal.

The banks of the "Mississippi" were soft and slimy, and Rogers missed his footing and dashed headlong into its turbulent waters. The water at that place was almost two inches deep, the mud underneath it "full fathoms five." Head foremost into the soft black mud went Rogers. When he rose to the surface he could easily have passed for a large muskrat. No one would ever have mistaken him for a human being, and children seeing him would certainly have believed they had stumbled on a bug-aboo.

"Oh, you *dirty* boy!" shouts Harry Powers, while Dobson, forgetful of his accurate shot, rolls over on the ground, holding his sides with laughter. Frank, frightened at first by the accident, now joins the others in laughing at the unfortunate Rogers.

"Get the muskrat, Rogers!" cries Dobson, between his convulsions of laughter.

"The muskrat be blowed! I'm half blind," answers Rogers, trying to pick the mushy black substance out of his eyes and ears.

"If there's any one has a knack of falling in the mud I make a motion it's Rogers!" declares Dobson.

"That's right," answers Harry, "his name is *mud* every time."

"We'll take him home and put the hose on him!"

"Won't he smell like a bunch of American Beauties when the mud dries!"

"He'll have to be quarantined!"

"Rogers, if dirt was trumps, what hands you would hold !"

"The case must be reported to the Board of Health !"

These were some of the crumbs of comfort furnished by Dobson and Harry Powers.

"Oh, you fellows think you're funny," answers the miserable Rogers. "But if you felt as I do, you wouldn't see the fun."

"No, there's no fun about it," Dobson replied, "it's simply all mud. Mud to the right of him, mud to the left of him, into the valley of mud, some one had blundered."

"Oh, say, give up your fooling, and help a fellow get this stuff off," pleaded Rogers.

The boys answered the appeal, and with their pocket knives scraped the clinging ooze from the boy whom it enveloped. In a quarter of an hour Rogers, having washed his face, not bothering with his neck, made a fairly presentable appearance. After that Dobson skinned the dead muskrat, a performance Frank watched with the greatest interest. When Dobson was finished he would take the skin home, put it through a chemical process and then it would be added to his other trophies, of which he had a goodly number. "Dobson's Menagerie" was what his play room box was called. Birds' eggs, birds' nests, a crow with a split tongue that could talk as well as a parrot, a couple of flying squirrels, a chipmunk, a muskrat's skin, a full rigged schooner of his own carving, dead butterflies, a tobacco pouch made of a mole's skin, a snake preserved in a bottle of alcohol, and numberless other things living

and dead, found a hospitable place in "Dobson's Menagerie."

The boys returned home after five o'clock, receiving a scolding for staying out so late in the woods. Rogers had to run the gauntlet of a crowd of boys, who made all manner of fun of him. But little did he care for their fusillade of wit. He had to face another battery which he dreaded much more.

The clothes-room and infirmary were under the care of Sister Josephus. She had been in charge of it when the fathers of some of the boys were lads themselves at the college, and she was the bane of every small boy's life. A lecture by her was a thing to be avoided if possible. Rogers, appreciating this, sneaked in the back way to the clothes-room, hoping to get a change of clothes and make his exit unseen. He had all but accomplished his purpose, when suddenly the sound of a soft voice fell on his ear.

"Well, Master Rogers, taking clothes without permission, are you?"

The unlucky Rogers collapsed. He had forgotten, on entering the room, to look into a distant corner of it, where the old nun sat reading her prayer-book, protected from his sight by a tall wardrobe. She heard some slight noise, and looking up from her book, discovered the intruder.

"This is a fine state of affairs, when a boy can walk in here without permission and take anything he wants."

"Please, Sister," Rogers pleaded, "I didn't know you were here or I'd have asked your permission."

"I suppose it was because you didn't think I was here that you came in the back way?"

This was a knock-out blow for Rogers, and he sobbed to gain sympathy.

"If you knew how badly I felt, Sister, you wouldn't be so hard on me."

By this time the nun had got a good look at his clothes, and at the sight of them she threw up her hands in horror. "Nothing but mud! even the pockets are full of it. How, child, did you ever get into such a state?"

"We were just playing, and my foot slipped, and I fell into the 'Mississippi'."

The old nun shook her head. "Well, well, I wonder what your poor mother would say if she saw you now?"

Rogers began sobbing again. "These aren't my new clothes," he added, by way of explanation.

"They are not your new clothes!" the nun repeated, her voice rising in anger. "Is that a reason why you should throw yourself into the mud? Is it because you are anxious to wear your new clothes that you deliberately destroy your old ones? What will your father say when he comes here to see you and I tell him what you have done? Falling into a mud-pond on a chilly day like this. You might get pneumonia and die in a week! Go into the infirmary and change your clothes, and stay there to-night."

Now this banishment on another occasion would have been a welcome sentence, but at present it did not at all fit in with Rogers' wishes. He would be missed from study

hall, and the prefect would want an explanation. The explanation would not explain sufficiently. The prefect would declare that it was the same old story of laziness, and for the next week, when the boys were allowed the freedom of the woods, Rogers would be kept in bounds. He did not, therefore, relish the idea of going to the infirmary on the present occasion.

"Please, Sister, when I change my clothes may I go back to the college? I'll be all right."

"Go into the infirmary as I tell you, and don't be such a disobedient boy!"

Master Rogers marched off with a woebegone look on his countenance. Then the nun sought the prefect and explained matters, saying boys would be boys, and that it was an accident. After that she went to the kitchen and ordered a tender piece of steak, a cup of tea, and a plate of hot buttered toast for the culprit. When these were ready she carried them in to him.

"Try to eat a little if you can," she said coaxingly, "and then go to bed. I hope you won't have a cold in the morning. You needn't worry about Mr. Livingstone being angry, as I saw him, and you are excused from class to-morrow."

Master Rogers' heart beat with delight. No sooner was the old nun out of the room than he demolished the steak, toast, and tea. When she returned again he had gone to bed.

"How do you feel now?"

"A little better," the young hypocrite answered, in a feeble voice.

"Well, I trust you'll be all right to-morrow, and that you will never do such a foolish thing again."

"No, I won't, Sister ; I have learned a lesson this time."

The old nun bade him good-night, to which he faintly replied. When she was gone he smiled in the darkness at the happy turn things had taken ; a long sleep in the morning till eight or nine o'clock, no classes to be prepared, and a tender piece of steak or the wing of a fowl for breakfast. So contented was he that he did not feel certain that he would even exchange places with Dobson, for the muskrat's skin.

The old nun is dead and gone now. Her lectures were much dreaded by the small boys. She would keep the younger lads perspiring in heavy flannels till the middle of the month of May, when they were anxious to change at least by the first day of the month. Woe to a boy that she saw lying on the grass before the month of June ! She had known a boy to contract a cold this way and die of it. This would never occur again as long as she could prevent it. Thus she exercised a mother's care over every young lad in the school—lecturing all transgressors severely, and then telling the prefect that boys would be boys, and sending an order to the kitchen for a tender steak and a plate of toast.

One is glad to lay this little wreath upon her grave.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HALLOW-EVE FIRE.—EVERY BOX IS NOT LIKE PANDORA'S.—“YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE.”—CHARMING CHARLEY.—THE SCENE IN THE PANTRY.—A SAD ENDING.

WHEN the centre pole was installed in its place, the work had only begun. The limbs of trees were cut off and brought in from the woods and piled about the pole, in the shape of a wigwam. When this work was accomplished a collection was taken up among the students, every one contributing ten cents, which money was used to buy empty tar and oil-barrels. These barrels, after being filled with paper and dried leaves, were placed within the tent-like enclosure and served to give the fire a good start.

Hallow-eve arrived and the boys, having eaten an unusually good supper, accompanied with an abundance of apples and nuts, repaired to the campus. When they were assembled there, the President of the college appeared and amid cheers lit the fire. In a few moments the flames mounted on high and a most magnificent blaze illuminated the heavens for a mile around. While the fire was in progress, impromptu speeches by members of the different

classes were delivered and after these followed the college songs. It is not easy to describe in print the pleasure of such an evening, but the fun was there in abundance.

With Hallow-eve the cold set in, and the consoling aroma of steam filled the house. Late in the month the first snowfall arrived, and the little Cuban boys ran about like mad, never before having seen the soft white flakes which fell from above. One of these lads, so the college tradition had it, when he first saw snow, gathered some of it in an envelope and mailed it to his folks living in Cuba, thinking it would reach them in safety and that they would enjoy the novel sight.

Thanksgiving day brought to Frank a huge box of good things. Beatrice had recovered from her anger and indignation and she was only too anxious to help her mother prepare the box which was to be sent to Frank. Cold turkey, oranges, a huge cake covered with frosting, a five pound box of mixed candy, small sweet cakes, glasses of jelly, and a new pair of skates, made up the contents of the box.

Dobson, Rogers, Harry Powers, and Vincent Allen were Frank's guests, and what a meal they had! How insipid afterwards the hash seemed to stomachs spoiled by such luxuries!

With Thanksgiving day came skating. The "Mississippi," usually not more than three feet wide and a few inches deep, had been swollen with recent rains and overflowed its banks. The meadows were flooded for half a mile and the ice was like glass. "Fox and Geese" and "Prisoners' Den" on the ice by the small boys, and fancy

skating by the big ones were the order of the day. Things went on smoothly with Frank. He was rather inclined to take life easy and fleet the time with story-books when he should have been studying his lessons. Vincent Allen kept watch over him, and chided him whenever his weekly marks were below the average.

For several weeks life had been uneventful at the college. But things were not to remain in this state. A change came and it came in this way. One night, when the wind was howling outdoors and the snow lay several inches thick on the ground, Frank was suddenly awakened in his bed, and a voice whispered harshly in his ear, "Your money or your life!" No sooner did he awaken than a bright flash in his eyes almost blinded him. So frightened was he for the moment that he lost all power of speech. Before he could realize what had happened, the light disappeared and Master Rogers, who was kneeling at his bedside, said in a whisper, "Say, King, didn't I do that like a regular burglar?"

"What's the matter?" asked Frank, still shivering with fear.

"Why, I sprung my dark lantern on you, and asked you for your money or your life, that's all."

Frank, now reassured, sat up in bed.

"Isn't it a daisy?" Rogers asked, showing the lantern.

Frank examined it closely and pronounced it the right thing. "But I say, Rogers, you oughtn't to wake a fellow up that way; you almost frightened me to death. I didn't know where I was at."

"I did it pretty slick, didn't I?"

"Yes, a little too slick!"

"Do you know why I called you?" Rogers said, ignoring Frank's answer.

"No, I'm sure I don't."

"Well, I'm going to tell you the best thing yet. I was down in the kitchen this afternoon, and in the room off the kitchen there are about six bottles of soda water and a fine big cake."

"Well, what good is that to us?"

"What good is it? Why it's good to eat of course."

"Well, fetch it up and I'll eat it," Frank answered, a sleepy smile spreading over his face.

"Say, you think you're funny, don't you?"

"No, but I'm beginning to get hungry."

"Well, jump up and dress and come down and have a feast. I've been awake all the time watching the prefect. I thought he would never go to bed."

"What, go way down-stairs to the kitchen in the middle of the night?" asked Frank, amazed at the proposition.

"Why, sure; you're not afraid, are you?"

Frank thought for a moment. "I'd like to have the cake and soda water, but we might be caught."

"Oh, don't be such a coward! Who's going to catch you? Everybody's in bed."

"Go and get Dobson, and the three of us will go together," Frank proposed, relenting a little.

"Oh, there's no use asking Dobson. He always throws a shoe at you if you wake him up."

"Well, ask Powers then."

"No, I won't ; we had a fight to-day."

Frank was silent.

"You're the worst scare cat I ever saw. We could have a fine meal, and to-morrow tell Dobson and the other fellows what they missed."

Frank began to give way before the blandishments of the tempter. "Don't you think we'll get caught, Rogers ?"

"Why, of course not. If it wasn't a sure thing, do you suppose I'd risk it ? Come on, it will all be over in ten minutes."

Frank finally consented, and got out of bed and hurriedly dressed himself.

The two boys crawled along the sides of the beds, pausing when they reached the hallway, to put on their shoes. After this they made their way quietly down the stairs, and out into the quadrangle. Everywhere there was peace and quietness. The limbs of the horse-chestnut trees were covered with snow, which was still falling. The snow lay over everything and the trees bowed under its weight.

Frank, quick to scent danger, caught Rogers by the arm, at the same time exclaiming : "Say, Rogers, if we cross there our footprints will be seen in the morning and we'll be caught."

"Nonsense !" replied the wily Rogers, "the snow will cover up every trace of us before morning."

"That's so," Frank admitted, struck by the sagacity of his companion, though still the scene filled him with awe. The long rows of unlighted windows, the distant barking

of a dog, and the death-like silence brooding over the college had a glamor all their own.

"Oh, Rogers, I think we had better go back ; it's awfully lonesome."

"Oh, don't be such a coward !"

"I can't help it—don't you think we'd better go back ?"

"Well, if you want to go back alone you can ; I won't. And I'll bet you get caught."

"Oh, I don't want to get caught."

"Well, if you don't, just stay with me."

"Do you think we'll be safe ?"

"Sure !"

"Well, all right, whatever you say," answered Frank, resigning himself to the inevitable.

"Come along, then, we have lost enough time already."

Rogers started across the quadrangle, Frank following him. They reached the side of the building in safety. Rogers, who could be depended upon to know the things which it would have been better for him not to know, unerringly went to the only window on which the catch was broken. He hastily threw up the window and made his way into the interior of the building, followed by Frank. For a moment they were in darkness. Suddenly a strong light struck Frank's eyes, blinding him. Rogers had called his dark lantern into play.

"Say, isn't it fine !" he exclaimed, in an ecstasy, throwing the light at will about him. Frank admitted that it was.

"It's a regular detective lantern."

"Is that so ?"

"Sure. It's just the kind detectives use when they are on the scout for bank-burglars and murderers."

Frank was not quite over his fear yet and this declaration made him look on Rogers as a hero.

"Say, did you ever read 'Charming Charley, the Prince of Detectives'?"

"No," Frank answered.

"Well, 'Charming Charley' always used this kind of a lantern. That's the reason I use it. Say, you ought to read 'Charming Charley.' It's the best thing you ever read in your life. Wait till I tell you about him. He was one night hiding in a bank with two other detectives. He got the tip that three bank-burglars were going to break open the safes that night. Well, the three burglars came along, never suspecting anything. The room the detectives were hiding in was dark as pitch and they kept so quiet they didn't even breathe. The burglars blew up the safes and filled their pockets with gold. They then started to clear out, but 'Charming Charley' snapped his dark lantern (it was just the same kind as mine) and said quietly, as if nothing was the matter, 'Hands up, gentlemen.' The burglars grabbed their pistols but it was too late. 'Charming Charley' and his men had them covered. 'Who are you, anyhow?' growled the principal burglar. The detective smiled and said, 'They call me "Charming Charley."' Say, you could have knocked those burglars down with a feather, they were so surprised. As soon as the chief burglar heard the name he knew the game was up. 'Surrender, boys; "Charming Charley" has the drop on us!' Say, you ought to read that detective story. It's No. 206 in the

Old Cap. Collier Library. You can buy it at the newsstand in the village."

"Don't you think we ought to get the cake and soda water?" Frank said, interrupting his voluble friend.

"Oh, that's so; I came near forgetting all about them." Rogers led the way to the pantry and the bright flash of the lantern rested softly on the large cake and the bottles of soda water. Without further ado the boys began operations, stuffing themselves as fast as they were able. Rogers was in a merry humor.

"Say, we're the whole show, don't you think so?"

Frank was not quite over his fear yet, but he answered that he thought so.

"This is a case where we take the cake," Rogers remarked, growing more facetious.

"I hope the prefect don't take us," answered Frank, still fretting a little.

"Oh, don't worry about that. All you have to do is to be foxy. That's my motto; 'be foxy.' Keep one eye on what you want to do, and the other on the prefect, and you're all right."

"That's hard work, and it's apt to make you cross-eyed."

"It's easy enough if you know how to work it. Now if you were to come down here alone I'll bet you would be caught. But you see, when I have you in tow, everything goes on in apple-pie order. I'm like 'Charming Charley'; I never get caught!"

Just as Rogers finished speaking and while his breast was still swollen with pride—that sin by which the angels

fell—the door suddenly flew open and revealed the President of the college, carrying a lighted candle.

Frank had a piece of cake in one hand and a bottle of soda water in the other. The bottle fell from his lifeless hand and broke into a thousand pieces on the floor. The cake slipped its moorings and joined the soda water. He dropped his head in fear and shame. Luckily that was attached to his body, so it did not join the remnants of the banquet. There was a pause—an awful pause that seemed to last for ages. Finally the voice of the President broke the silence.

“Well, Master King and Master Rogers, I never believed that any two boys under my care would be guilty of such an action. Leaving your beds in the middle of the night, breaking into the kitchen, and stealing the property of the college.”

A cold perspiration bathed Frank from head to foot. His knees knocked together, and it was a wonder he did not fall in a heap where he stood. He felt a rushing sensation through his head, and a singing in his ears.

“You may go to your beds, now,” the President said, “and in the morning tell Mr. Livingstone that you are to retire to the infirmary, and remain there until I can communicate with your parents. I will not have such students as you in the college.”

As soon as this privilege was given the boys, they withdrew. When they were again in the snow-covered quadrangle Rogers whispered, “I wonder how he found out we were there?” Frank answered by bursting into tears.

They hurried to the dormitory, disrobed and retired.

And now, gentle reader, we will leave Frank alone in his sorrow. We will draw the drapery of his couch about him, as tenderly as a young mother would with a sick child, and we will not attempt to portray or analyze his suffering. There are some things so sad that to describe them would add neither to the pleasure of the writer nor the reader.

CHAPTER XVI.

*ON THE EVE OF SUSPENSION.—LOSS OF APPETITE.—SISTER
JOSEPHUS.—THE FIRE.—VINCENT ALLEN.—THE
RESCUE.—THE PARDON.—RESOLUTIONS
ARE IN ORDER.*

THE next morning the news of the night's escapade spread like wildfire, the older students wondering at the daring of the boys, the younger portion of the community looking upon them as heroes. Nothing just like this incident had occurred at the college within the memory of the oldest boy.

Frank and Rogers reported to Mr. Livingstone, who spoke feelingly to them. The President had sent him word of the occurrence, and the prefect knew that the situation was a grave one.

When breakfast was over the two boys were marched to the infirmary, there to be kept in close confinement until their parents could be communicated with. On the way to the infirmary a crowd of small boys cheered them. Rogers acknowledged the applause in a half-hearted way, but Frank held his head down and passed by in silence. When they reached the room assigned them in the in-

firmly, Frank threw himself on a bed and burst into a violent fit of sobbing. Rogers stood by looking at him with an awestruck countenance, beginning to understand how serious a plight they were in.

The morning dragged on, and Frank ceased crying from sheer exhaustion. The two boys stood looking out of the window. A cold rain had followed the snow-storm, and the day was inexpressibly dreary. Smoky, snow-covered fields stretched away in every direction. The melting snow dripped silently from the trees. There was no movement, no life anywhere, to relieve the monotony of the scene.

The Angelus bell at noontime had just begun to ring out its clear notes, when the door was opened, and Sister Josephus entered. She had been away all morning and had just heard of the trouble. She came over to the boys, shaking her head in a sorrowful way.

"How could you do such a thing—leave your beds in the middle of the night and steal down to the pantry? Why didn't you come to me if you were hungry?"

The boys were silent.

"Always so thoughtless, Master Alphonse!"

A fond mother had chosen for Rogers, at his baptism, the names "Alphonse Stanley," but it must be confessed that Rogers as he grew older did not live up to the dignity of these names.

"And you, Francis," the nun continued, "you in whom I had placed so much hope—you whom I looked upon as one of the most promising boys in the college—you—" but she did not proceed any further. Frank burst into

tears and Rogers followed his example. The nun gazed at them with eyes full of pity.

"Well," she said, after a pause, "you've got to have your dinner, so I will send it over to you."

"Please, Sister, I don't want any dinner," Frank answered, between his sobs.

"I don't want any either," Rogers added.

The old nun was shocked. Boys refusing their dinners ! "Indeed and you will," she answered decisively, leaving the room. A half-hour later she returned, followed by a servant carrying a tray weighted down with food. A table was quickly made ready, and Sister Josephus commanded the boys to sit down.

Frank tried to eat, but could not. There are certain occasions when the old adage, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," is a foolish experiment. Rogers, too, was unable to do justice to the meal. It seemed such a shame ! Two college boys before a mountain of toast, a tender steak, "surpassing" coffee, and a dish of assorted fruits, and yet no damage done ! What a pity, what a pity ! The nun urged and cajoled them, but it was no use.

In the afternoon the President came over to the infirmary. His interview with the culprits was short and severe. He told them that he had considered their case all morning and that he had now made up his mind. At first he had resolved to expel them ; but after farther thought he had concluded that he would mitigate this sentence, and suspend them from the college for one month. He moreover stated that he would send word to their parents, and that the punishment would go into effect in the morn-

ing. "Discipline must be preserved, and no greater breach of discipline has occurred at the college in many years." After more sad and angry words, the President withdrew. Sister Josephus met him at the door, and used her good offices for the benefit of the boys, but the President was inexorable. When he retired the boys had another crying spell. The dreary day dragged slowly on, Sister Josephus doing what she could for her charges. "Night dropped her sable curtain down," but there was no star to pin it with. The melancholy rain still pattered against the windows, and the white snow of the previous night looked mean and rusty. Bedtime arrived, and the boys undressed and went to bed, but gentle sleep did not visit Frank's eyes. Perhaps it was just as well. He would be saved the pain of awakening in the morning to a new realization of his miserable state. He tossed and tumbled about in his bed until it was near midnight. The house was painfully quiet. Frank could hear the irregular breathing of Rogers at the other end of the room and it seemed like distant moaning. Once Rogers jumped up in bed while asleep, crying out: "Don't send me home! Don't send me home!"

This cry froze the blood in Frank's veins and brought out a cold perspiration on his forehead. A clock somewhere in the house, striking slowly and solemnly the hour of twelve, sounded to Frank like a bell he had once heard tolling in a cemetery. Would the night ever pass? He tossed about for some time and then suddenly he thought he detected the faintest smell of smoke. He was sure no one could be lighting a fire at that time of night. There were only three sleeping apartments on the floor on which

he was. One was vacant, Rogers and himself occupied another, and Vincent Allen, who was having one of his bad turns, was asleep in the third one. A little later the smoke was more pronounced. Frank rose in bed, and peered about the room. He could just distinguish Rogers at the other end. He slipped quietly out of bed, and walking to the door, opened it. Smoke which filled the corridor rushed into the room. Frank hastily closed the door in fear and hurried over to the bed of his sleeping companion.

"Get up, Rogers," he cried ; "the house is on fire !"

Rogers jumped out of bed and ran to the window, opening it. "Let's get out here," he suggested.

"But what about Vincent Allen ? he's in the next room," said Frank.

"Oh, I forgot that."

"I'm going to open the door and cry fire." Frank ran to the door shouting "fire" at the top of his voice. Then he made up his mind that he was going to help Vincent Allen. He hastily plunged a towel in water, and wrapped it about his face. He had heard some one say that this was a good way to get through thick smoke. He hurried along the corridor to the room in which Vincent was sleeping, and finding the door ajar started to go in, but the smoke was so dense in the room that he was overcome in a moment, and could not enter. He rushed back to his own room, still crying "fire."

"Oh, what will we do ?" he said to Rogers, "the smoke is so thick I cannot get into Vincent's room."

"Let's drop out of this window, and try to climb through

the window of his room." This could be easily done, as the sleeping-rooms were just over the laundry and not more than ten feet above the level of the ground. This was a new idea to Frank and he immediately acted upon it. The two boys, still shouting "fire," crawled out of the window, and were soon in front of Vincent's room.

"I'll climb up on your back, Rogers," Frank said.

Rogers got in position, and Frank, standing on his shoulders, struck a match and peered into the room. He could just distinguish the bed, and see that it had no occupant. He looked about the room but nowhere was Vincent Allen visible.

"Push up the window," Rogers shouted.

Frank tried to do so, but found that it would not open.

"It's locked," he cried in dismay.

"Break a pane of glass and open the latch," Rogers happily suggested.

Frank struck the glass, shivering it into a dozen pieces, and cutting his hand badly. In the excitement, however, he did not feel any pain. The window was quickly opened and Frank looked into the room. Just below the window he could see the prostrate form of Vincent Allen.

"I see him!" he cried, jumping off Rogers' back. He clung to the window-sill and Rogers, catching hold of his leg, pulled himself up to where Frank was. The two boys leaned over into the room, dragged the lifeless form of their comrade out, and let it down gently to the ground. Just then several of the farm hands, attracted by Frank's cry of "fire" arrived, and awakened the other inmates of the dwelling. The crackling flames soon afterwards burst

through the building, and mounting quickly to the top, enveloped it. The whole college was now aroused, the President and prefects, followed by a hundred students, appearing on the scene.

It was impossible to do anything to save the structure, so they stood by watching it burn. In less than half an hour the roof fell in, and the building was in ruins, a fire engine from the village arriving too late to be of any service.

The prefects soon restored order and the boys were marshalled back to the college, Frank and Rogers spending the rest of the night in their own beds. Vincent Allen still remained unconscious and was carried to the President's room and the doctor was sent for.

Morning dawned and the excitement over the fire broke out anew. The first report circulated said that Vincent Allen had died. This threw a gloom over the college, as he was a favorite with all. Frank and Rogers were praised on every side by the students. But better than this praise was the fact that Mr. Livingstone promised the offenders that there would be a revision of their case.

Just as breakfast was over the President, unannounced, stepped into the refectory. Immediately there was a deep silence.

"I am glad to be able to tell you," the President began, "that your companion, Vincent Allen, has just been pronounced out of danger."

Loud applause greeted this news, as it was a great relief to everybody. When the applause died away, the President continued speaking. "It also gives me much pleasure to

commend publicly the gallant and manly conduct of two of your comrades, Alphonse Rogers and Francis Kirg. But for their forethought and persistent efforts, we would now be mourning the loss of one of our number, and it would be a deep loss indeed. In consideration of the coolness and bravery of these two boys I am only too happy to remit the severe punishment which my duty forced me to impose upon them."

The President could get no further. A wild shout rent the roof, and continued for several moments. Frank felt a great load lifted from his heart. A few hours before and he was more miserable than ever he had been in his life. Now the nightmare had disappeared before the breaking of a new and happy day. So glad was he at the President's announcement that tears of joy filled his eyes. The only thing that now marred his happiness was the knowledge that word had been sent to his mother to come to the college, for he knew how grieved she would be over his misconduct. But happily this pain, too, was spared both himself and his mother. The President, early that morning, had dispatched a messenger to the village to ask the postmaster to please not send the two letters he had mailed the previous evening. The letters were therefore brought back to the college and two mothers were saved heartaches.

Frank and Rogers were the heroes of the hour. They had to re-tell a dozen times their escapade in the pantry, and their heroic rescue of Vincent Allen. Frank, however, was not intoxicated with the applause he received. He knew he had had a very narrow escape. He had passed twenty-four of the most miserable hours of his life, and if

there was anything that was fixed in his mind it was the resolution that he would never get into such "a peck of trouble" again.

"Between you and me, Rogers," he remarked to that gentleman, "*it don't pay!*"

CHAPTER XVII.

*CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.—THE JOURNEY TO NEW YORK.—HOME AGAIN.—BACK AT COLLEGE.—THE EXAMINATIONS.—
DEVELOPMENT OF A LITERARY TASTE.*

THE Christmas holidays were the next thing in view, and the boys looked forward to them eagerly. Rogers kept account of the approaching time.

"Christmas is coming, fellows," he would say, when the conversation lagged. "There's only three hundred and sixty-five hours more before we leave this blooming place!" Later he managed to get the count down to minutes. "Only fifteen thousand minutes, and we'll be free from these classic walls all right!" There was grave danger of Rogers' brain being affected by these intricate sums in arithmetic, but he stuck manfully to his task. The days dragged on, and the accountant went deeper into the matter. "Seventy-two thousand seconds more, and we'll see what New York looks like!"

Thus Rogers kept a record of the days, minutes, and seconds, until finally the morning arrived on which the Christmas holidays began. Then what excitement! Everybody is up before six o'clock in the morning, while the stars are still shining in the sky. Valises are hurriedly

packed, good-bys and Christmas greetings exchanged. Two big sleighs are waiting for the boys who are to catch the New York train.

"Hurry up, Frank," shouts Harry Powers, "the sleighs are ready to start."

"Good-by, King! Good-by, Rogers! Good-by, Powers!" shouts Dobson, who, as he lives in Kentucky, must spend his holidays at the college. Vincent Allen, with a few others, are to remain also.

"See you in New York next week," shouts Dobson to the crowd in the sleighs, as the drivers snap their whips and the horses start down the road.

It is a fine ride over the snow on a bright crisp morning. The laughter and singing of the boys, the jingling of the sleigh bells and the shouts of the drivers urging their teams, make things lively along the way. The village is soon reached and the boys climb into the train, monopolizing it. Business men on their way to the city lay aside their morning newspapers and become boys again, and pandemonium reigns while the journey lasts.

When the conductor appears, he is cheered heartily, and he is told that he is: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." He takes the boys good-humoredly, and asks them not to carry the car away with them. People waiting at the stations recognize the collegians and laugh at their pranks. The train in less than an hour reaches the city, the boys give a parting shout, and then break up and start for their homes.

Mrs. King and Beatrice are in the ferry-house, watching with straining eyes for Frank. At last he appears, and after

being smothered with kisses, he is brought home in triumph.

Mrs. King and Beatrice had hurried off without their breakfast to meet the returning hero, so breakfast is prepared, and Frank, not having eaten very heartily on account of the excitement of leaving, sits down to enjoy another morning meal.

"Well, how do you like college life?" his mother asks.

"Oh, it's splendid, mamma! There's always plenty of fun, and the boys are a jolly set. There's Harry Powers, who was the first boy I met. He's a brick. Then there's Dobson, he's fine, too. I believe he could write a book about birds and animals. He knows a whole lot about them. Then there's Rogers, he's the funniest fellow you ever saw. He's in hot water all the time. And there's Vincent Allen. Say, mamma, I think he's the best boy in the world! He's just like a saint. The only sad thing is that he's awful delicate. And there are lots of other boys, too, that I like very much." Thus he ran on, telling incidents and stories of his life at college, greatly amusing his mother and sister.

Uncle George, hearing that his protégé was home for the holidays called in to see him. Frank was catechised at great length but this time came off with flying colors. Uncle George did not seem to be so severe as on a former occasion. Perhaps the holiday season had a softening effect upon him. He laughed, and told stories of his own boyhood, and when he was about to leave put his hand into his pocket and took out two gold pieces, giving one to Frank and the other to Beatrice.

Dobson came over from the college three times during the ten days' vacation and met Harry Powers, Rogers, and Frank, and they went skating together. The skating was followed by a dinner first at the house of Harry Powers, then at Rogers' home, and finally with Frank.

Vincent Allen received an invitation from Frank's mother to share her hospitality. Mrs. King and Beatrice were delighted with him, the former treating him with the tenderness of a mother, and trying, for the little while she had him with her to build up his strength and make him strong like her own boy.

Altogether the "college boy" had a merry time of it during the ten days he was at home. But the pleasures of this life are transient, as we know, and so Frank's vacation "rapidly passed by as ships carrying fruits," the day after the new year finding him back at college. The semi-annual examinations were held during the first week of February, and the boys had a busy month preparing for them. Frank having been somewhat careless in his studies did not pass a brilliant examination. It is true that others in his class did worse, but that is not saying much for him.

When the examinations were over there was great rejoicing in the college, and story books were in demand. Relaxation was felt to be necessary after such a grind, and the motto, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," was very popular. History, geography, algebra, and all languages living and dead were given a holiday to recover from the treatment they had received, and sundry other volumes engaged the attention of the boys. "Charles O'Malley," "David Copperfield," "Vanity Fair," "Valen-

tine Vox," "Rosemary," "The Last Days of Pompeii," "Dion and the Sibyls," "The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green," "Robinson Crusoe," "Thaddeus of Warsaw," "Ivanhoe," "The Last of the Mohicans," "Cast Up by the Sea," and other works of fiction were the order of the day.

But too much reading of fiction does not conduce to a knowledge of the classics, so the groanings of the professors over unprepared lessons reached the ears of Mr. Livingstone, who swooped down upon story books and confiscated all he could lay his hands on. This action drove the boys to their class-books and serious work held sway again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

*THE LOST POCKETBOOK.—THE ACCUSATION.—THINGS LOOK
DARK FOR FRANK.—VINCENT ALLEN AND DOBSON
TO THE RESCUE.*

NOTHING of importance happened in Frank's life for several weeks, if we except the fact that he tried to stop a snowball with his eye, which resulted in considerable damage being done to that member. The cold had grown more intense and everything was snowbound.

Jordan the bully had not bothered Frank from the time of their fight, though the relations between the two boys were somewhat strained. Jordan was one of those who never forgave an injury. He had several mean traits in his character, and he made no attempt to reform them. He was both ill-tempered and revengeful, and you never could tell just where he would stop in his underhand way of doing business. He cordially disliked Frank, but kept away from him because of Frank's fighting qualities.

One morning just after breakfast, when Frank, full of animal spirits, was jumping around gleefully, a lad of his own years by the name of Lyons came up to him, and in a voice that could be heard in all parts of the play room exclaimed, "Say, King, I want you to give me back my pocketbook that you stole from me."

Immediately there was a hush in the room, and a num-

ber of boys crowded around Frank and his accuser. Frank looked at Lyons to see if he meant what he said. It was evident from the boy's manner that he was in earnest.

"Give you back your pocketbook that I stole from you!" said Frank, with a puzzled look in his face; "I don't know what you mean."

"Yes, you understand me very well. You needn't try to play off innocent. You sneaked over to my bed last night while I was asleep, and went through my pockets and took my pocketbook. You knew I had five dollars, because you saw me open the letter that contained the money."

"And you say that I stole that five dollars from you?"

"Yes, you did, and you can't deny it."

"You mean little scoundrel!" shrieked Frank, moving towards his accuser. "I'll knock your head off."

He took a step towards Lyons, but some larger boys closed in and held him back. This angered Frank the more and he turned on them.

"What right have you to interfere when he insults me the way he did? He called me a thief, and I'll make him eat his words."

Frank tried again to reach his accuser, but he could not get near him on account of the phalanx of boys acting as a protection.

"You took my pocketbook," Lyons again repeated, "and if you let me search your pockets, I'll bet I'll find it."

"That's a fair proposal," Jordan the bully said. "He accuses you of being a thief and he says he can prove it by searching your pockets. Let him try."

Frank turned and sneered at Jordan. "I'll not let *him* try, or you, or any one else. He's a mean little follower of yours, and I wouldn't lower myself by letting him touch me."

"Oh!" laughed one of the larger boys, "that's pretty tall talk. You must think, King, you are some pumpkins."

"I think I'm an honest boy, and I'll not be called a thief. And what's more I'm not afraid of fighting any one that says I stole the pocketbook."

"This isn't a thing to be settled by a fight," Jordan responded. "Either you took the pocketbook or you didn't. If you didn't take it, let your pockets be searched and if the missing property is not in them, then we will all be satisfied. It's a simple way of settling the whole thing, and I don't see what objections you can have to it."

"I have every objection to it, and I won't allow it."

"Well, then, turn your pockets out yourself," another boy proposed.

"No, I'll not do that either," Frank responded, by this time being stubborn and bitter.

"Because you know you are guilty," broke in Lyons.

Frank's fingers began to twitch. "It's a good thing for your health you're so well protected. If I could lay my hands on you, I'll bet a house you'd take back those words."

"If you gave me a black eye or a bloody nose," the boy responded, with deadly logic, "that wouldn't prove your innocence."

"No, but it would shut your mouth," answered Frank.

"See here, King, it seems to me that all this talk is begging the question," another boy said. "Either you took the pocketbook or you didn't. Lyons says you did. Why don't you prove your innocence by emptying your pockets?"

"Because I don't see why I should empty my pockets," Frank answered.

"Well, you'll have to."

"Well, I won't."

"Then I'll make you."

"You'll do nothing of the kind. The best thing you can do is to mind your own business."

There was a whispered consultation for a moment, and then three large boys moved towards Frank.

Frank jumped on top of the play room boxes and getting into a corner began to kick violently. This was a successful move and kept the others at bay for several minutes. But one of them finally managed to get a good hold on Frank's legs, and the other two closed in and made him a prisoner. Frank fought and squirmed and gave them all they could do to hold him, but his strength gradually left him, and he was overpowered. The next moment he was hastily searched, and there was found in his coat a small pocketbook containing a five dollar bill and a gold ring with the letters A. L., which all knew meant Alfred Lyons. A murmur of surprise ran through the group at this revelation. One boy spoke up, saying, "Report the matter to Mr. Livingstone. Our pocket money isn't safe with such a person in the school."

Lyons stepped forward, and after receiving his property

magnanimously declared, "I won't report the matter to the prefect. I simply wanted what belonged to me, and now that I have it I am satisfied. If King wished to borrow a dollar of my money I would have been only too happy to have loaned it to him." All during this time Jordan stood back in the crowd, keeping very quiet. There was a malignant look in his face, which was not pleasant to behold.

At the discovery of the pocketbook Frank became speechless. No one was more surprised than himself at the turn things had taken. He never imagined that the pocketbook was in his possession ; but where was the person whom he could convince of this fact ?

"We understand now, King," said the boy who had searched him, "why you stood so much on your rights and your honor."

There was a laugh among the others at this sarcastic thrust.

Frank was too overcome to make a reply. A champion, however, stepped forward to defend him, in the person of Vincent Allen, who made his way to Frank's side, and then turning to the other boys said slowly and deliberately, "I for one do not believe that Frank King took the pocketbook."

There was a profound silence for a moment, as Vincent was much esteemed and respected by all the boys. His words made an impression.

"Well, but how do you explain the fact of his having the pocketbook in his possession, and of his refusing to turn out his pockets ?" one boy objected.

"I cannot explain away the fact that he had the pocket-book, but I firmly believe that he did not know he had it, and that when he refused to allow himself to be searched, he was standing on what he believed to be his rights."

"Well, it looks like an ugly piece of business," the same boy declared.

"Yes, I admit that, but it does not change my belief. I know Frank King thoroughly, and I have always found him an upright, honorable boy. His word is his bond." Then turning to Frank, he continued, "Can you explain to us how you came to have the pocketbook?"

"No," answered Frank, the tears fast filling his eyes; "No, I can't tell how it came there, but I give you my word of honor I didn't take it."

He fell back on the play room boxes, and sobbed violently.

"You have seen Frank King in a fight—in an unequal fight," Vincent continued, "and you saw him stand up like a man, with not a tear in his eye. He proved then that he was not a coward, and he has proved since by all his actions that there is no mean or dishonorable trait in his character."

These few words were delivered with considerable eloquence, and had a great effect on those who heard them.

"I make a motion," said one boy, "that we drop the whole thing and not tell the prefect anything about it. Lyons is satisfied, so let it go."

"No," answered Vincent Allen, "I'll tell Mr. Livingstone myself. An injustice has been done Frank King, and this affair might leak out some day when he would not

be able to make an explanation ; so it's better that Mr. Livingstone know all now."

Frank himself concurred in this opinion. He was certain that the "Philosopher" would not believe him guilty. Just then Dobson, Rogers, and Harry Powers burst into the room.

"What's the trouble?" shouted Powers, hurrying into the group. Seeing Frank with bowed head, and eyes red from weeping, he pushed his way over to him and asked in surprise, "Why, what's the matter, Frank?"

Harry knew that it must have been something extraordinary that could bring tears to Frank's eyes.

"They say I'm a thief," Frank replied, "and it looks as if I am." He burst into angry tears again, as the injustice of the whole thing presented itself to his mind.

A hurried explanation had to be given to Powers, Dobson, and Rogers, and when this was finished, Dobson, with all the swagger of a fire-eating Southerner, walked into the middle of the group, and standing with his arms akimbo, spoke thus: "I know Frank King well, for I've seen a great deal of him, and I know that he would rather cut off his right hand than steal. He's not a thief, and if there's anybody here that dares call him a thief, let him step out."

Nobody moved. Dobson was more than a match for any one of the boys who were present. His action, it must be confessed, in no way proved that Frank was not guilty of taking the pocketbook. But Dobson believed in Frank's innocence and to his mind that settled everything. The boys gradually dispersed, and Frank, in company with Vincent Allen, sought out Mr. Livingstone and narrated what

had happened. The prefect said he was glad they came and told him. He had had a fair chance to study Frank's character, and believed him to be incapable of doing such an action, both on account of his natural honesty, and also because of the religious motives which would have restrained him. Mr. Livingstone said he would look into the matter further and assured Frank that he did not think him guilty. This was a great consolation to Frank, but the accusation, however, left an open wound.

CHAPTER XIX.

*THE BRAND OF A THIEF.—A BROKEN RESOLUTION.—FRANK
RUNS AWAY.—JACK FRISBIE'S HUNDRED-YARD DASH.—
THE DOVER EXPRESS HELD UP.*

A HEAVY cloud hung over the "college boy" after this painful episode. It would be hard to imagine a more bitter thing in a boy's life than his being accused of stealing. To be pointed at by some of his comrades as a thief, and to find himself shunned by them ; to hear whispered words as he passed by, and to know that even those boys who formerly had been friendly to him, now felt ashamed of him, was a hard trial to a sensitive lad. Dark days these were, and Frank would gladly have left the school if he had his mother's permission.

There was, however, as there generally is, a silver lining to this black cloud. Vincent Allen sought Frank out every recreation, and the two boys spent their free time together. It was the advice and encouragement that Frank received from this delicate lad which heartened him and kept him from despairing.

One afternoon, after class was over, Vincent waited as usual for Frank. He found him on this occasion boiling over with rage. The matter of the theft was being discussed by a group of boys, and just as Frank passed by

them he heard one remark : " You would never think he would be so mean." This sent the blood to Frank's cheeks and he was in a bad state when Vincent met him.

" I tell you what it is, Vincent, I'm not going to stand this thing any longer. I'm going to get out of this place altogether—I'm going to run away."

A surprised look came into Vincent's face, showing he was a little shocked at the strong language. " What's happened now ? " he asked quietly.

" Oh, the same old thing ; the same miserable insult. Everybody believes me to be a thief, and I'm not going to stay in a place where I have such a reputation."

" Everybody doesn't believe you to be a thief," Vincent protested.

" Every one but you does," Frank answered angrily.

" No, there are others who believe in your innocence—there's Mr. Livingstone, and there are Dobson, Powers, and Rogers and many others. Why, only this morning I heard one of the seniors defending you. He said that a boy of your character would not steal, and before he had finished his defence of you, the others agreed with him."

Frank softened a little at his friend's words. " I know it's some consolation to have a few who believe in my innocence, but it's pretty hard when nearly the whole school does not."

" The whole school will some day."

" I wish I could believe it," Frank sighed.

" Just have a little patience, and you'll see my words come true."

Frank thought for a moment before answering. He be-

gan to realize for the first time how kind to him Vincent had been. He had sought him out continually, and had spoken on every possible occasion in his defence. He had used his influence, which was considerable, and in every way had worked for Frank as a brother. Frank was naturally of a generous disposition, but he had been so full of his own trouble, that he had not considered the unselfish kindness of Vincent Allen. It now began to dawn upon him.

"I can never pay you back, Vincent, for all you have done for me," he said, breaking the silence.

"Yes, you can," Vincent quickly responded, "just you have a little more patience and weather this trouble, and I'll be well rewarded for anything I may have done for you."

Frank's face brightened. "Well, for your sake, I'll try, Vincent," he said, hope springing up anew in his breast. "To have so good and so true a friend is a great consolation."

Harry Powers joined them and the conversation took another turn, Frank entering into it with more animation than he had shown since the trouble began. He had made up his mind firmly this time that he would outlive the disagreeable charge that had been made against him. But alas, he was soon again to be tried sorely. When the recreation was over, and he was making his way to the study hall, he came across a group of lads, several of whom were in sympathy with Lyons and Jordan. A new boy had arrived at the college that day and he was in the care of one of the group. Frank, as he came along, could see that he

himself was the topic of conversation, and that the new boy was looking at him curiously. Before getting out of earshot Frank distinctly heard the new arrival say, "I guess I'll keep a close watch on my pocketbook when he is about."

Frank's cheeks flushed, and his first inclination was to go back and make the boy swallow this sentiment. Discouragement the next moment took possession of him, so instead of returning to fight the newcomer, he went on his way to the study hall and threw himself into his seat in despair.

"Even the new arrivals will have me marked as a thief!" he exclaimed angrily, hope again dying away in his heart. There was no chance for him, he felt, to live down the injustice that had been done him. Every day either directly or by innuendo the charge of theft was laid at his door.

"I won't stand it any longer; I'll run away!" he said bitterly.

The die was cast! He quickly gathered together the letters he had received from his mother, and put them in his pocket. He took from his strong box a dollar, which was all his cash on hand, and which would be sufficient to pay his fare home. Next he wrote a short note to Vincent Allen, and enclosing it in an envelope, carefully sealed it, and on his way to the door dropped it on Vincent's desk. He received permission from the prefect in charge of the study hall to absent himself from the room, and then immediately started, by a circuitous route, for the woods. In

a few moments he arrived there safely, made a dash for liberty, and was free !

It happened that less than five minutes after Frank made his escape, Vincent Allen, who was suffering from one of his usual headaches, was excused from class and came back to the study hall. As he sat down at his desk he noticed the envelope addressed to him and began slowly to open it. When its contents met his gaze his eyes dilated, and looked as if they would burst in his head, and a big lump filled his throat. This is what he read :

“MY DEAR VINCENT :

“I tried hard to stay here because you have been so kind to me, but I could not bear it any longer. The new boy who came to-day has been told of my supposed stealing. It will always be the same. I am sorry to go, and leave you and so many boys with whom I have been friendly, but I can’t help it. I hope we will meet again some day. Good-by.

“Your devoted friend,

“FRANK KING.”

“P. S. Please tell Mr. Livingstone that I am much obliged to him because he never believed me guilty.”

Vincent slowly read the letter a second time, and then looked about hopelessly, not knowing what to do. At that moment the door of the study hall was opened and he turned towards it mechanically. Jack Frisbie, one of the senior class, came in and nodded to Vincent, whose seat was near the door. At the sight of the older student, an idea came into Vincent’s mind. “Perhaps,” he reasoned, “it is not too late to intercept Frank, and persuade him to return to the college.”

To think was to act ! Vincent asked permission from

the prefect to speak to the member of the senior class. He told Jack Frisbie—"Mr. Frisbie," the small boys called him—what had happened, and how it might not be too late to catch Frank, and bring him back to the college.

"Mr." Frisbie took kindly to the proposal, and was soon hurrying through the woods in the direction of the village. He made rapid strides, as he knew there was little time to lose. In fact, if the train was not belated he would hardly catch it. When he was still a good distance away he could hear the train whistling, and a moment later saw it rounding a curve, less than a quarter of a mile from the village. He put on steam himself, but the race seemed hopeless. The train slowed into the station, and the few persons who were waiting took their seats. The conductor's "all aboard" rang out clearly, and the train forged ahead. A moment later Jack Frisbie dashed into the station. "Just too late!" he exclaimed aloud.

He looked at the receding train and recognized the head of Frank King protruding from one of the windows. This caused him to take a new resolution. He was the best sprinter in the college, having broken all previous records for the hundred-yard dash.

"What's the good of being an athlete if you don't make use of your powers?" he thought.

The next instant he was flying like a deer after the disappearing train. People stopped to look at him, thinking he was mad. A man might run to catch a trolley-car, but to run for a train was sheer insanity! After the train, however, the sprinter fled, and in twenty seconds reached it. He clung for a moment to the iron railing at the back

of the last car, and then, with his strong arms, drew himself up, and leaping over the guard-rail, landed in safety on the car.

Just as he did so the conductor saw him, and made a rush at him, angrily demanding why he had taken such a risk with his life. Frisbie quickly pacified the conductor by explaining his errand.

"Running away from college?" the conductor repeated.

"Yes, and I want to get him back again and save trouble for his mother. He is in the car ahead."

"I'll fix that," the conductor said, touched by Frisbie's earnestness. He gave several quick pulls to the rope which connected with the engineer's cab, and in a few moments the train slowed up. The conductor and Jack Frisbie had, in the meantime, made their way into the next car, and found Frank in the corner of a seat, crying.

"Hello, youngster," Frisbie laughed, "what are you doing here?"

Frank turned around surprised, and his face grew pale.

"I heard that you ran away, so I came after you." Frank held down his head and did not respond.

"Come there, hustle along out of this and get back to school. You ought to be glad your parents can afford to send you to college." This was the conductor's decision, and it left little room for argument.

"Come along, Frank," Jack Frisbie said kindly, taking him by the arm and assisting him to his feet. Frank burst into tears, and started out of the car with the older boy. To confess the truth he was not sorry at the turn things

had taken. When he had arrived at the station and had time to sit down and think, a change came over him. His point of view began to shift. While at the college, and suffering from the injustice that had been put upon him, he saw things only from his own standpoint. After buying his ticket for New York, the picture of a sorrowing mother began to grow strong in his mind. By the time the train had started and he had fully realized that he was on his way home, he half regretted his action. After all, it would have been better to have been more patient. It would have been better to have silently borne with a few more insults, than to have carried his trouble home to his mother, and thus dash her great hope in his future.

When, therefore, Frank followed Jack Frisbie off the train, it was really with a ready step and a light heart. The conductor shouted after him a bit of fatherly advice.

"Say, young lad, you stick to college, and thank God for the blessing. I wish my boy had the same chance."

The next moment the train moved off, and the conductor was kept busy explaining to the curious passengers the reason why the Dover Express was held up on its way to the city.

Jack Frisbie piloted his charge by a roundabout way back to the college, and deposited him safely in the study hall ; and no one but himself and Vincent Allen ever knew that Frank had run away.

CHAPTER XX.

*A CONFERENCE BETWEEN DOBSON AND ROGERS.—AMATEUR
DETECTIVES.—A NEAT PIECE OF WORK.—A NEW DAY
DAWNS FOR FRANK.—THE PASSING OF JORDAN.*

"THAT pocketbook business is the strangest affair I've heard of in my time."

The author of this sentiment was Dobson. He was sitting behind the handball alley, on an old log from which he had brushed the snow, and Rogers was his sole companion. The thermometer was many degrees below freezing point, and the wind cut through the branches of the trees, lashing them angrily.

"Yes, it's a mystery for fair," Rogers answered. "It would take a 'Charming Charley' to make it out."

"One thing is certain," Dobson went on, "King never took it."

"No, he's not built that way."

"It's a trick somehow."

"That's about the size of it."

"I'd give a farm to unravel the mystery."

"Wouldn't it be great?"

Thus the conversation was tossed about as the wind tossed the snow.

"I'll bet my hat Jordan knows something about it," Dobson said.

"That's just what I think, too."

"I'd like to put up a job on him, and on that little sneak, Lyons."

Rogers lifted his head. Anything in this line he was ready for at all times. "I'll tell you what we'll do," he proposed, "we'll set a trap in the steam house and catch two rats and kill them and put one in Jordan's bed and the other in Lyons'." Rogers considered this a brilliant idea.

Dobson looked at him in disgust. "What good would that do? Who's afraid of a dead rat?"

"Well, let's put them in alive, then."

Dobson laughed outright. "You mean well, Rogers, only you're crazy."

Rogers was not sure whether this was a compliment or not, so he let it pass without comment.

"Well, suppose we fill their beds with snow and when they get in, they'll think they've struck icebergs."

Dobson did not consider it worth his while to cap this suggestion with any further remark, so he kept on thinking quietly.

Rogers, interpreting this silence as a "sit on," waited for Dobson to offer a suggestion. After deep thought it came.

"I'd like to shadow Jordan and Lyons for a few days and hear what they have to say to each other in their confidential chats. I'm sure we would get some information about the pocketbook."

This was a new idea for Rogers and he took to it kindly. A piece of work just in "Charming Charley's" line!

"Wouldn't it be rich!" he exclaimed joyously. "I'd carry my dark lantern, and we could follow them around

by night. I'll make two masks and we can wear them, and then we won't be discovered ! Say, Dob., old boy, you've got a head for inventions ! ”

“ You've got a head that ought to be examined,” was Dobson's rejoinder.

A long silence followed this remark. Dobson was buried in deep thought, and all the enthusiasm had been knocked out of the would-be detective by the last laconic reply. After some moments of reflection a plan matured in Dobson's mind.

“ We have got to find some place where we can watch Jordan and Lyons and be able to hear what they say, without their knowing we're around. In that way we may get some information.”

Rogers' interest revived. “ I know just the place ! ” he exclaimed.

“ Where ? ” Dobson asked.

“ Behind the boilers in the steam house. I was hiding there the other day and I saw Jordan and Lyons come in and sit down. It's a new racket of theirs. We could hide on the other side of the boiler behind some old lumber that is piled up there, and they would never know we were around.”

Dobson took kindly to this plan. The two boys discussed the matter at some length, and finally came to a decision. It was agreed that Rogers should not go to dinner the next day, but take up his position in the steam house. Dobson planned to leave the table just before the dessert was served, carrying in his pockets enough food to feed the hungry Rogers.

The next day arrived, and just as Lyons was entering the refectory, Dobson tapped him on the shoulder, and whispered : " Say, Lyons, King never took your pocketbook. There's been some crooked business played on him and something is going to fall soon."

Lyons turned around surprised to make an answer, but the prefect caught his eye, and he held his peace. Just as the dessert appeared, Dobson begged to be excused, and his request was granted. He hastily joined Rogers and this worthy fell to eating what his friend had brought. Dobson's reason for telling Lyons that there was another theory afloat in regard to the pocketbook, was to start him talking the affair over with Jordan.

When a shout announced that the students were out of the dining-room, Rogers hastily finished his meal, and the two boys hid themselves and awaited developments. A few minutes later they heard the door creak, and Jordan entered, taking up his place near them. A little while after Lyons appeared.

" I wonder what Dobson meant by what he said to me before dinner," Lyons asked, whittling a stick as he spoke.

" Oh, nothing," Jordan replied, " he's only guessing. No one but you and I know anything about it, so everything is all right—unless you've been blabbing ! "

" What do you take me for ? " Lyons asked, resenting the accusation.

" Well, I haven't said anything and you say you haven't, so he knows nothing. Let Dobson do what he likes ; I had it in for King, and now we're square. He'll know better next time than to monkey with a buzz-saw."

Dobson, in his hiding-place, shook his head. Rogers moved to get a better view of the situation, and in doing so disturbed a board, thus making a noise.

"What's that?" asked Jordan, looking around.

He and Lyons turned in the direction of the pile of lumber. Dobson glared at the impetuous Rogers, and hissed under his breath: "You're a fluke!"

"Must have been a rat," Lyons said, after a moment's silence.

This opinion seemed to satisfy Jordan, so they settled down again to the subject in hand.

"Well, we managed the little trick on King in great shape," Jordan continued.

"Yes, it was a neat job, though I was awfully afraid some one might have noticed me putting the pocketbook in his coat pocket."

"Nonsense! everybody was asleep."

"Well, I guess if the trick has not been discovered up to this time, we are safe now, though I'd like to know what Dobson meant."

"Oh, he was talking through his hat; he doesn't know anything."

There was another unmistakable racket in the wood-pile, and the next instant Dobson confronted them.

"I don't know anything?" he repeated coolly. "Yes, I know all. And I know you two are the meanest sneaks in this school."

Jordan and Lyons sat still, with white faces, unable to say a word. If the President of the college had suddenly come upon them, they could hardly have been more sur-

prised. They were caught red-handed, just after they had acknowledged themselves the perpetrators of the most contemptible action that had ever stained the annals of the college. Lyons, when he realized his position, burst into tears, and threw himself at Dobson's feet, crying out, "Oh, please don't tell on me, I'll be expelled! Jordan made me do it."

"Yes, I suppose he did," Dobson answered, "but he couldn't have made you do it if you weren't such a contemptible little lickspittle."

Jordan hung his head, unable to say anything in his own defense. Rogers now came out of his hiding-place, and, never being able to see the serious side of anything, began to laugh. "We trapped you pretty neatly, Jordan," he said; "it was a regular 'Charming Charley' piece of work."

Dobson turned on his heel and walked to the door, followed by Rogers. This woke Jordan up.

"Please, Dobson, don't tell on us. I'll do anything if you don't tell Mr. Livingstone."

Dobson made no answer but disappeared through the door, in search of Frank King and Vincent Allen. He found the two boys chatting together in the reading-room, and he was struck by the sad look in Frank's eyes, which had been often noticeable since the morning Lyons accused him of being a thief.

"Hello, Vincent," he said, drawing up a chair, and nodding at the same time to Frank. The two boys gladly made way for him.

"I've come to have a chat with both of you about that

pocketbook affair. Did you ever have any suspicion of how the thing occurred ? ”

Vincent thought for a moment. “ No, I never could make it out. Frank didn’t take it, and beyond that I have no theories.”

“ Well, Rogers and myself know the whole thing.”

Vincent’s eyes sparkled, and Frank’s face grew pale.

“ It was Lyons himself,” Dobson continued, “ who put it in Frank’s pocket. He left his bed during the night and put the pocketbook in Frank’s coat, and then immediately after breakfast, before Frank had discovered his riches, Lyons made the accusation. But Lyons was only a tool in the hands of Jordan, who was getting even with Frank on account of their fight last fall.”

“ How did you find that out ? ” Vincent asked, a hard look, which was most unusual with him, coming into his eyes.

“ ‘ Charming Charley ’ and I hid in the steam house, and heard them discuss the whole thing, and acknowledge what they did. They are around there now crying and moaning. They begged me not to tell the ‘ Philosopher,’ so I thought it better to come and consult with you before acting in the matter. Jordan, of course, is the real culprit. Lyons is only a miserable little tool in his hands.”

The boys discussed the subject at length. Frank, now that he was cleared of the charge, was naturally anxious that his good name in the school be restored. After a half-hour’s consultation it was agreed that it would be better if Jordan and Lyons would go themselves and acknowledge to Mr. Livingstone what they had done. This was cal-

culated to save them a greater punishment. When the consultation was finished, Dobson sought out Jordan and told him of the plan agreed on. After some whimpering and begging off, and finding that Dobson was inexorable, Jordan and Lyons went to the prefect and confessed their crime.

At the end of the recreation when all the students were assembled in the study hall, Mr. Livingstone came forward in a solemn way which always gave token of some trouble, and after surveying the boys for a moment slowly said :

“One of your companions, Frank King, was accused some weeks ago by Alfred Lyons of stealing his pocket-book. A cloud has been hanging over Frank King ever since the accusation was made. I am glad to be able to state that he did not steal the pocketbook. It was put into his pocket one night by Master Lyons, who next morning accused him of stealing it. Lyons acted thus at the instigation of another boy, Jordan, who seems to have been prompted by a spirit of revenge. Both Jordan and Lyons have been removed from your midst, and are at present in the infirmary.”

The quietness of death ruled the study hall as the prefect ceased speaking. Then a burst of spontaneous applause swept through the room. Joy over Frank's being cleared of the charge of theft, and satisfaction because of the discovery of the real culprits, were the motives which prompted the applause.

Frank began to feel again as if life had a future for him. He had been tried in the furnace, and while it did not add anything to the gayety of his life, it was an experience for

him. He had great reason to be thankful for the kindly advice and friendship of Vincent Allen, and be it said to his credit, he appreciated this fact.

The case of Jordan and Lyons came up next day. Jordan was adjudged the real culprit, as he was the older boy, and had incited and actually frightened Lyons into the sin and crime of which they were both guilty.

Frank went to the President of the college and asked that their punishment be made as light as possible. The President received him kindly, said some very complimentary things to him, but told him that the case was too extraordinary to admit of anything but a severe and drastic punishment. The next day a carriage drove up to the door and Jordan entered it, never to return to the college again. Lyons was allowed to remain, as it was believed he had been made a tool of by Jordan.

A heavy weight of sorrow was lifted from Frank's heart, and he began again "to scent the rose above the mould."

CHAPTER XXI.

VINCENT ALLEN.—THE LATIN MEDAL.—FRANK'S PROGRESS.— GOOD ADVICE.

EVER since the night of the fire in the infirmary, when Vincent Allen was almost suffocated to death, his health had been steadily growing worse. Never a robust lad, the shock of that night proved too much for him.

Frank, among others, noticed this change and it saddened him. He had nothing but admiration for Vincent ; for his unaffected piety, his unselfishness, his devotion to duty and his patience and cheerfulness during his illness. There was not a student in the college who did not like Vincent, and though they could not help noticing the change in him, they strove in every way to hide their knowledge of the fact.

One day, however, a boy who had left the college, returned to it again. He shook hands with those whom he knew, but passed by Vincent Allen, not recognizing him on account of the decided change in his appearance.

Such little incidents happened occasionally, but Vincent passed them off with a little laugh and if they hurt him he did not show it. At last, however, he was forced to give up his studies, and go to the infirmary. This was in the latter part of April.

Frank of late had been going more with Vincent, and the companionship had made him a more serious boy. Sitting at the bedside of his friend he learned some lessons which gave him food for thought for many a day afterwards.

It happened that just at this time an alumnus of the college paid a visit to his old school and in his enthusiasm presented several medals to be awarded on Commencement Day. One of the medals was given to Frank's class in Latin. The donor asked that all the boys be allowed to start "*ex aequo*" and that the medals be decided by a written and an oral examination at the end of the year. His wish was granted, and as a consequence there was great excitement and rivalry among the boys. Vincent insisted that Frank should try for the medal. Frank had not thought of doing so, as he did not stand very high in his class, but Vincent's enthusiasm carried him away.

The sick boy was lying on his bed one day, propped up with pillows, looking out on the world of green that was fast coming into life. Dinner was just over and he recognized a step in the corridor. A moment later Frank came into the room. He drew up a chair to the side of Vincent's bed and communicated to him the news of the morning.

"The boys in my class," Frank began, "are very much excited over the medal. Everybody is going to try for it."

Vincent smiled. "A good bit of that excitement will be over in a week's time," he said. "The fight will soon narrow down to a half dozen or less."

"I'm afraid I'll be out of it by that time myself," Frank said.

"No, you won't," Vincent answered. "You are in to stay, and you will be heard from at the finish. You will get the medal if possible, and if not the medal, at least an honorable mention. Think how proud your mother will be of you!"

Frank wondered how one so ill could take so much interest in him and his success. He realized how ardently Vincent desired him to try for the medal, and he made up his mind then and there that he would enter the contest with a will and put all his energy into the task, even if he received no other reward than pleasing his comrade.

"I wish you were in our class this morning, Vincent," Frank said, laughing. "Rogers made the funniest mistake you ever heard. He had to translate the words 'hic jacet' and he fluked on them. I leaned over and whispered the translation, 'here lies.' He thought I said 'he lies,' and not satisfied with my translation he improved on it and shouted out 'hic jacet—he tells a falsehood'!"

Vincent threw his head back on the pillow and laughed heartily.

"You should have seen the uproar in the class. They heard us in the study hall."

"Poor Rogers," Vincent said, still smiling, "he is always the 'Patsy Bolivar' of the school."

"Yes," Frank answered, "if there are any mistakes to be made or trouble to fall into, Rogers seems to be always the victim."

"But about the medal," Vincent said, coming back to the subject in which he was most interested. "I want you to plunge right into the contest. If you go at it with

a will, there's no reason why you should not win the prize. You study hard, and I will be your private tutor. It will be a pleasure to me to review matter that I am familiar with. When you haven't anything else to do, you can come over here and we'll study together."

Frank took kindly to the plan, and promised that he would do his best. They chatted for a few moments longer and then Vincent dismissed his pupil, as he knew Frank was the captain of the junior baseball team, and that there would be no after-dinner practise if the captain did not appear on the campus. From his window Vincent could see the baseball field, and it was a distraction to him in his sickness to look out on the constantly changing scene. Whenever Frank made a good play and gained applause, it ran through the sick boy like new wine.

The days passed by, and little by little Vincent Allen grew weaker. Frank studied as he had never studied before and his progress astonished his private tutor. Before the other boys were awake in the morning Frank was at his book, which he took to the dormitory with him at night. He did not tell Vincent of this, as he knew it would not be sanctioned. In less than two weeks' time the contest for the medal had practically narrowed down to three boys, and Frank was acknowledged to be one of them. Vincent asked permission to have him come to the infirmary for an hour every afternoon, and during this hour the two boys went over the lesson of the next day.

It was now the second week of May. Frank, as usual, came in one afternoon carrying in his hand a bunch of wild violets, which he had gathered in the woods. Vincent

thanked him for his thoughtfulness. Frank drew over a chair to the bed, and opened his Latin book, but Vincent left his unopened on the counterpane. When Frank was ready to begin his recitation he looked up at Vincent, and was surprised to see the sad, serious look in his eyes.

"Don't you feel well?" he asked, tenderly, "for if you don't we'll let the recitation go and have a chat."

Vincent came out of the brown study into which he had suddenly plunged. "I'm afraid, Frank," he said, after a little hesitation, "that I am not going to live much longer."

This was the first time that he had spoken so openly of the danger of dying, and his words frightened Frank. There was silence for several moments. Vincent was thinking, and Frank had not recovered from his fear and surprise. Finally Vincent continued, "I have been lying here some weeks now and I have had plenty of time to think the whole matter over. I can see that I am getting steadily weaker every day, and that the end cannot be very far off."

By this time Frank's eyes were filled with tears, which he was trying hard to hold back.

"I don't think you are as bad as you imagine, Vincent," he said, restraining his grief, "if you only gain enough strength in a week or two to get out in the open air, I am sure you will soon be all right again."

"If', is the whole trouble," the sick boy answered, a weary smile showing in his eyes.

"Never mind, we'll get the 'if' out of the way," Frank responded more buoyantly. "Then we'll have you run-

ning through the high grass, catching tadpoles and pollywogs in the 'Mississippi', and when you're tired, taking a rest under the old apple-tree."

Vincent smiled at his companion's enthusiasm. "If you had your way, Frank, I would soon be doing all those things; but I am afraid they will never come to pass, and that's why I brought the subject of my illness up to-day. I wanted to tell you how glad I am that you came to this college; not only because you saved me from being burned to death the night the infirmary caught fire, but also because of your coming here so often to visit me, when you might be out enjoying yourself with the other boys."

"Why, Vincent!" Frank exclaimed in surprise, "it's I that owe you so much for all you have done for me. If I hadn't saved you the night of the fire I would have been dismissed from the college, and my mother would have been terribly cut up; besides you have always given me good advice, and even now if I stand any chance of getting the Latin medal it is because of your help. I am the one who ought to be grateful."

"No, I don't think so," Vincent persisted. "I know how much you are in demand during recreation time, and how much fun you have, and I'm sure it's a great deprivation for you to come over here and sit down in a sick room."

"Why, it's nothing of the sort," Frank answered. "I'd rather be here any time than out with the other boys."

Vincent's eyes lit up. "I'm so glad to hear you say that. It makes me feel that your coming here is not so great a task."

"A task?" Frank exclaimed. "Why, it's a privilege. The 'Philosopher' says that. I met him just now when I was on my way over, and he said that to have your friendship was a privilege and an education."

"That was very generous of Mr. Livingstone; but generosity to me has always been one of his failings."

Sister Josephus came into the room and finding that the sick boy was at ease, she left again immediately.

"Well, to come back to where we started from," Vincent said, after the nun had retired, "I feel I am growing worse day by day, and for that reason I would like to say some things to you, Frank, provided you will not take any offense."

"Certainly not; there is nothing *you* can say to me that will offend me."

"Well, I'm going to be old-fashioned for a few moments and give you some fatherly advice," Vincent said, smiling a little. "I suppose I needn't tell you that from the first day I met you I was interested in you. I used to watch you at your games, and admire your strength—perhaps I wished at times I had some of it."

"I'd like to be able to give some of it to you," Frank said, his eyes filling up.

"I know you would," the sick boy answered, stretching out his thin white fingers, and touching affectionately the strong, sunburned hand of his companion, "and it's just because we are *such* good friends that I want now, when I am so very ill, to say a few words to you. I'm sure you won't be offended?"

"No fear of that," Frank quickly responded.

"Well, then," Vincent went on, pulling himself with difficulty higher in the bed, "to begin with, you take too many risks. You are so impetuous that often you act and then think afterwards. Consider, for instance, the night you and Rogers left the dormitory. It's poor business for me to chide you about that, since it saved my life, but you know I mean what I say for the best. I went all over that matter with Mr. Livingstone and he admitted that the action was not premeditated ; but, as he said, it looked bad. It looked like a contempt for rules, and moreover, it was an unusual thing. Suppose now you had been suspended from the college. Wouldn't that have been awful ?"

"Terrible," Frank answered, a tremor passing through him.

"And yet," Vincent argued, "you did not realize what the consequences might be. A boy who isn't a milksop cannot keep out of trouble all the time ; but with a little forethought he can avoid doing anything which may have grave consequences."

"I have been very risky," Frank admitted, "but I won't be that way any more."

"That's a good resolution. Just be a little more thoughtful and you'll come through all right. And there's another thing," Vincent continued, turning on his side, and resting his head on his wasted hand, "don't give too much time to athletics. I don't mean to exercise, but to sporting papers and sporting news. A boy can never make his mark in college if he gives nearly all his time to sporting affairs. I've seen boys here who could tell all the records for years of baseball and football games ; who knew

the players' first names and middle names, and every bit of gossip connected with them. Surely such professional knowledge was unnecessary."

Frank remembered to have spent many an hour of study time reading these same sporting items and he blushed a little, for the cap fitted him.

"Now my lecture is finished, Frank, and I beg your pardon if I have spoken harshly."

"Oh, no, you haven't," Frank answered. "I'm glad you have spoken to me the way you have. I won't get into trouble again ; I'm determined on that."

Vincent let his head fall back on the pillow and a pleased look came into his eyes. Just then the college bell rang and Frank returned to the study hall, a wiser and a more thoughtful boy.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHALLENGE.—OLYMPICS vs. IMPERIALS.—PREPARATION FOR THE GAME.

THE thing of most interest at this time to the small boys was the fact that the Olympic Baseball Club, of which Frank was captain, had received a challenge from a nine in New York, known as the Imperials. The challenge said :

“We, the members of the Imperial B. B. C. of New York City, challenge you, the members of the Olympic B. B. C., to play a game of ball on your grounds on the afternoon of May 2d.

“WILLIAM HICKS,
“Captain Imperial B. B. C.”

Frank, after he had read the challenge, brought it to Mr. Livingstone and asked permission to accept it. The permission was granted, and the challenge was duly accepted. For several days before the game the small boys were an excited set. The game was discussed during every recreation, and served as an endless topic of conversation. It was the first time the Olympics had ever been allowed to play a team from New York City, and they appreciated the privilege. The Imperials were known to be strong baseball players, and if the Olympics were to be in at the finish they would have to work hard. Frank realized

this and put all his energy into the practise games. He had sense enough to know that attention to details was half the battle. To be a perfect baseball player meant something more than to be able to hit the ball or catch a fly. Frank had seen professional players, and he had made a study of their methods. He had been one of fifteen thousand people who watched the New Yorks play the Chicagos, and he had profited by the experience. He had seen "King" Kelly play ball, than whom perhaps no better player ever stood on the diamond. Now, "King" Kelly's rule was to take advantage of everything. If he did not manage to make a base hit, he would try hard to beat the ball anyhow. If there was a chance to steal a base, the base would be stolen. Trusting to some one else to knock a runner around the bases was very uncertain work. "Take every chance," was the "King's" motto. Sometimes one would fail, but that was to be expected. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained!" "Dash," Frank discovered, was the necessary thing on the ball-field, and he tried to get as much of it into his team as he could. Base running was practised by every member of the nine, and they were all taught how to slide to a base and save themselves from being put out. Throwing to bases was another exercise. Out-fielding and in-fielding were also given great attention. In a word, each department of the game came in for a careful watching, so that in the end the team work was well nigh perfect.

At last the day on which the game was to be played arrived, and a bright day it was. Not a cloud in the sky, and a hot sun, which is a good stimulant in early summer.

Frank had his nine out for a short practise in the morning, so as to get them limbered up. As the day progressed, the excitement increased. Dinner was bolted "*à la Américain*," and a little after one o'clock the sentinels on watch at the end of the field gave the signal that the visitors were in sight.

Immediately the college bell was rung and its clear notes welcomed the New Yorkers. The whole college was on the campus by the time the visitors arrived. When they did, however, put in an appearance, consternation was written on the faces of Frank and his companions. The visiting team was composed of boys ranging from fourteen to seventeen, while no one on the Olympic team was over fourteen years of age. Frank lost heart at this, and was on the point of declining to play, and giving the game over to the second nine of the college, which would be more of a match for the Imperials, when Mr. Livingstone happened along, and put new life into the ball players. He argued that boys who live in a large city have not the facility to practise that college boys have, and therefore the advantage in age did not do away with the chances of Frank's team winning. Moreover, it was the third nine that had accepted the challenge, and therefore it must play the game.

"Do your best, boys," Mr. Livingstone said, "and I believe you'll win."

A cheer greeted this announcement, and Frank and his men buckled to for a great fight.

The visitors were shown to their dressing-rooms and a little later, led by their captain, they appeared for their

preliminary practise. As soon as they came on the field they were received with a loud cheer. It was the rule of the college that visitors must be treated with great consideration, and their good plays applauded generously ; and it must be said to the honor of the boys that they adhered to this rule as nearly as human nature would permit.

The New Yorkers were dressed in maroon jerseys, gray knickerbockers and maroon stockings, and made a fine appearance. They were larger and heavier than Frank's team, and to the eye of a casual observer were more than a match for the college boys. While the visitors were practising, a loud shout attracted everybody's attention. The shout was occasioned by the advance of the Olympics. It was the first day the lads had worn their new suits, and they received an ovation.

Frank marched at the head, his face pale, and his heart beating. His nine wore white suits and blue stockings, and besides presenting a very pretty and immaculate appearance, they showed the college colors—white and blue.

The visitors gracefully retired from the field for a few moments, and gave the Olympics a chance to throw the ball around.

When this exercise was completed, the umpire called the two captains together. There was an exchange of courtesies, a moment's chat and then the umpire flung a penny into the air.

"Heads !" cried Frank. "Tails !" cried the captain of the Imperials.

The penny lingered for a moment in the air, as if making up its mind what to do, and then fell with its head up.

Frank thus had the choice of innings and he took the first turn at the bat.

The visitors filed into the field and a great quiet descended from somewhere, and brooded over everything.

The college boys and several hundred villagers lined both sides of the in-field, and the road was filled with the smart-looking traps of people who had their country residences along the mountain side. Nor must one forget to mention two others who were present, Frank's mother, and his sister, Beatrice.

"You would think the Alerts and the Rosehills were playing," Jack Frisbie said, surveying the lively scene. Then turning to Frank, he continued, "Now, youngster, do your prettiest; the eyes of the 'vox populi' are on you."

Frank smiled in acknowledgment of the interest taken in him by his senior, as he walked over to where the bats lay on the ground. He was determined on doing his best, and not giving up hope until the game was completed.

Before entering, however, on a description of what happened on this historic day it may be better in the beginning to give the names and positions of the players on both teams.

CHAPTER XXIII.

*PLAY BALL.—A LIVELY GAME.—BEATRICE AS A CRITIC.—
HARRY POWERS HORS DE COMBAT.*

OLYMPICS.

Frank King, (Capt.)	S. S.
Jack Ryan,	3d b.
Ed Kelly,	2d b.
Jim Reynolds,	1st b.
Vincent La Marche,	C. F.
Tom Healy,	L. F.
Joe Smith,	C.
Henry Dowd,	P.
Harry Powers,	R. F.

IMPERIALS.

Bill Hicks, (Capt.)	3d b.
Jim Pierce,	C. F.
Joe Reade,	R. F.
Arthur Kenny,	2d b.
Tom Murphy,	C.
John Chidwick,	S. S.
Eugene Quinn,	P.
Ike Wheaton,	1st b.
Tom Degnan,	L. F.

FRANK having chosen a bat that suited him, took his place at the home plate.

Quinn, the pitcher of the Imperials, rubbed the ball several times in a caressing way, and after looking about at the fielders, drove the ball in. Frank had a theory that the first ball pitched was often a good one to hit at, so he struck the ball, and landed it over the short-stop's head for a base-hit.

A burst of applause followed this successful opening.

Jack Ryan was next at the bat. After two balls were called on him, he sent a daisy cutter between first and second base, which the second-baseman fielded prettily and Ryan was put out, Frank running to second.

Ed Kelly was the next batsman and he lost no time in going out on a foul tip, which the catcher neatly trapped. There were now two men out, and Frank made up his mind to steal third. He played a good distance off the base, and as soon as the pitcher delivered the ball Frank ran for third, and most likely would have reached it had not Jim Reynolds sent a fly to short-stop, making three out and ending the first half of the inning.

Bill Hicks, captain of the Imperials, was first at the bat on his side. He sauntered up to the plate leisurely, waited for the umpire to call four balls on him, and then took his base, as if it was all a matter of course.

Jim Pierce followed, and he also waited, and got his base on balls.

Frank nervously plucked a blade of grass, and began chewing it pensively. This certainly was a bad start.

"What's the matter, Henry?" he asked the pitcher.

"Don't know; I guess I didn't get the proper gauge," the pitcher answered, making ready to deliver the ball to Reade the next batsman.

Reade tried the waiting game, but before he realized it, the umpire called three strikes and the crowd of onlookers smiled.

Kenny was next at the bat. As soon as the ball left the pitcher's hand, Hicks started to steal third. A shout from Frank attracted his catcher's attention and down went the ball to third base like a flash.

"Out at third!" cried the umpire, and the audience cheered.

Things began to brighten up a little. Two men out and

no runs was a fair prospect. Kenny was cautious, and waited for the ball to come near him, and when it did gave it a smart rap, but Ryan at third fielded it quickly, and the ball beat Kenny to first base, making three out.

The second inning began with La Marche at the bat. He opened the play in a lively manner by hitting a long fly to centre field, which was captured after a good run by the centre-fielder.

Healy followed La Marche, and caught the ball lower, sending it safely between second and first base. Joe Smith came next and knocked a wicked liner, which the short-stop left to the third-baseman and the third-baseman left to the short-stop; so between the two of them, the ball went and Healy managed to get as far as third base. This was lively batting, and Frank's courage revived. He ran over to third base and used the fullness of his lung power in coaching Healy, and incidentally disconcerting the pitcher.

"Now you're off—now you're off!" he cried, keeping the pitcher on the anxious seat.

Henry Dowd was next at the bat, and a high foul settled his account.

Healy grew more reckless at third base, when Powers stepped up as batsman. The pitcher, noticing this, threw the ball to third, and Healy's career would have come to an untimely end had not luck been on his side. The ball was a little wild, and Bill Hicks, who was guarding the base, misjudged it and it fell from his hands, rolling several feet away.

Frank gave Healy orders to make for home, which he did,

and by a successful slide on his stomach reached the plate in safety and amid great excitement scored the first run of the game.

Frank was the next batsman, but he went out ignominiously on three successive strikes, thus ending a lively half inning, with the score one to nothing in favor of the Olympics.

Murphy opened the play for the Imperials, and was easily retired on a pop-up fly to Reynolds at first base.

Chidwick fared no better, hitting a sharp liner to Kelly which the second-baseman received very kindly.

Frank was more than pleased at the way things were going. His nine was playing a good steady game, and he had no reason to complain.

Quinn was next at the bat.

"One strike!" cried the umpire. "Two strikes!" he cried again. Two strikes always make a crisis. The pitcher deliberated for several moments, and then sent in a wicked curve. Quinn managed to catch the ball on the end of his bat and the crisis was over, the ball landing on what Latin writers call the "*orbis terrarum*," five feet over the centre-fielder's head. On Quinn ran, while the spectators held their breath. At last the centre-fielder got his hands on the ball, but when he did so, Quinn had passed third base, and came home any way he liked, scoring a clean home run.

The applause that greeted him was loud and prolonged. Frank consoled himself by repeating that old-fashioned saying, "What can't be cured, must be endured."

Wheaton, the next batsman, was considerate enough to

go out on three strikes, and the second half of the second inning closed with an even score.

The third inning began with Ryan at the bat. He hit a slow ball just over the short-stop's head for what ought to have been a base-hit, but Chidwick ran with the ball and captured it with one hand, making a very clever play.

Kelly came next, and when he struck the ball it caromed off his bat over the first-baseman's head, and Kelly reached second handily.

Reynolds followed. He had invented a way of hitting the ball, which, when it worked well, was a great success. He would give the ball a short-arm stroke and place it just over the head of the third-baseman. He waited till he got the "sphere" just where he wanted it and then gave it a gentle tap landing it in the short left field, thus enabling Kelly to reach third. It looked like a run, and Frank took his stand at third base to "jolly" the runner home if possible.

La Marche was the next one to wield the willow. At the first ball thrown Reynolds ran to second, the catcher of the Imperials not daring to throw the ball to the baseman. La Marche, when the second ball was pitched to him, struck it towards first base, making a sacrifice hit, and Kelly scored, Reynolds going to third.

Healy followed, and he caught the ball solidly on his bat and sent it to right field. Reynolds scored and La Marche went to third, but Healy, in trying to reach second, was put out by a throw from right field. This ended the Olympics' half of the inning, with the score three to one in their favor.

The Imperials now took their turn at the bat, bent on tying the score. The history of their attempt can be written in a few words.

Dowd pitched only seven balls in this half of the inning, Degnan went out on three successive strikes, Bill Hicks followed suit, and Pierce, in attempting to lose the first ball pitched to him, succeeded in making a foul tip which Joe Smith grappled to his bosom.

The fourth inning began with Smith at the bat.

"Knock a shingle off the farmhouse, Joe," cried Frank, as the catcher went to the plate.

There existed a tradition at the college that some student, ages before, had accomplished this feat. To do it would mean that the ball would have to be hit a hundred feet beyond the professional record. However, the small boys believed in the tradition. Smith did make a valiant attempt to accomplish his captain's wishes but the centre-fielder got under the ball, and the farmhouse was spared.

Dowd was next at the bat, and Quinn, the pitcher of the Imperials, was accommodating enough to strike him in the ribs with the ball. This allowed Dowd to take his base, on the principle of "cut my head and give me a plaster." Harry Powers hit the ball over the pitcher's head. The short-stop fumbled it ; Dowd arrived safely on second, and Powers on first base. Frank was next and he sent a stinging liner to the pitcher, who dropped it, but picked it up immediately and threw Dowd out at third.

Ryan, the next hitter, sent a sky-scraper to Wheaton on first base. As there were two out, Harry Powers and Frank ran around the bases while the ball hung in the air. But

this was wasted energy, for when the ball came down Wheaton caught it and ended the inning.

"We'll have to hustle if we expect to win this game," declared Captain Hicks, as he came in from the field. "The score is three to one, and this is the fourth inning."

Reade took his place at the bat.

"Smash the first good ball right in the face," Bill Hicks said, as Reade stooped to gather a little fine dust on his hands, which were wet with perspiration.

"I'll try," Reade answered modestly. He was as good as his word and smash the ball he did, making a three-bagger.

This woke the crowd up again.

Kenny followed. "Got your batting shoes on, Kenny?" Captain Hicks called, from his place at third base, where he was coaching the runner.

Kenny smiled, and pawed the ground with his feet. Then he leaned out and swung his bat viciously at the coming ball, driving in Reade and getting second himself.

"A three-bagger and a two-bagger!" exclaimed Frank, in consternation. "What if they should get on to Dowd's curves?"

Tom Murphy followed Kenny, and went out on a fly to the pitcher.

"Now, Chidwick, knock the cover off it," cried Bill Hicks.

Chidwick in answer gave the ball a sounding whack right at Frank. Frank made a dive to trap it, but the bounce was an ugly one and the ball passed by him, going

out to left field. Kenny scored and Chidwick ran to second.

The visitors were now in great glee, as they had tied the score. Quinn followed Chidwick at the bat, and sent a high fly to short right field. Harry Powers started for it, and after a long run managed to catch the ball, but he could not recover himself in time to throw it to third, whither Chidwick had gone as soon as the ball landed in Harry's hands.

Wheaton was next, but just before he was retired on three strikes, Joe Smith let a ball pass him, and Chidwick came home, making the score at the end of the fourth inning, four to three in favor of the Imperials.

Things had taken a turn and the excitement kept growing. The two nines seemed pretty evenly matched, and everything promised a close finish. Frank was somewhat disheartened at the costly error he had made, and showed it in his face.

"See here, King," said Jack Frisbie, coming up to him, "if you let that error you made bother you you're going to lose this game. The only rule to follow when you make an error is to forget all about it." That this was excellent advice no ball player need be told.

Frank, for the first time during the game, got a chance to run over to speak to his mother. As soon as he appeared, Beatrice began catechising him.

"Why did you let that ball go by you?"

"Because I couldn't help it."

"Well, why didn't you get in front of it?"

"Because it was a short bounce and it fooled me."

"Well, why did you let it fool you?"

"Oh, don't bother me," exclaimed Frank in disgust, "you don't understand the game."

"I guess I do," Beatrice answered; "I understand that you're there to stop the ball and not to let two runs be made."

This nettled Frank and he grew sarcastic: "If you know so much, you'd better go out and take my place."

"I wish I could; I'd show them that if my brother couldn't play, that he had a sister who could."

Before Frank could reply Kelly hit the ball to third base, and gained first, as the throw from third was wild.

Jim Reynolds followed, and with the rapidity of a Winchester repeater, he went out in one, two, and three order, Kelly in the meantime managing to steal second. La Marche came next, and knocked a high fly to right field, which the guardian of that demesne captured. Kelly succeeded, however, in getting to third before the ball could reach there. Two men were now out and Kelly was on third base. Frank in a moment was at his side, yelling with all his might, "Now you're off! Take more room! Don't be afraid! One run ties the score!" and numerous other exclamations.

Healy came next at the bat at this critical moment. He fanned the air twice, and the third time sent a pop-up fly to the pitcher.

Kelly sauntered home crestfallen at the ill-luck that kept him from scoring, when to the surprise of everybody the ball fell from the pitcher's hands, and Kelly scored a

run, making the game four to four, at which it remained as Joe Smith went out on a liner to the third-baseman.

Degnan opened the play for the visitors. "Here's for a home run," he said as he chose his bat.

There must have been a hole in the bat, for though he struck viciously at the ball three times, the ball took no notice of his attempts, and he went back to the players' bench murmuring :

"Of all the sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these : 'it might have been.'"

Bill Hicks next stepped up to the plate and before you could say "Jack Robinson," he sent the ball over the first-baseman's head, and was not considerate enough to stop running until he was on third base.

Jim Pierce followed, but Dowd proved to be his auctioneer. "Going, going, gone," was the batsman's funeral dirge.

Reade was unreasonable enough to knock out a base-hit, and Hicks tallied, making the score five to four in favor of the visitors.

Kenny, the next batter, sent a high fly between centre and right field, La Marche and Powers both running for it. Frank judged that the ball belonged to the centre-fielder and so he cried out as soon as he could : "La Marche !"

Powers, not hearing him, kept on running, and both boys came together, La Marche, though stunned, managing to hold the ball, while Powers fell like a log beside him.

The umpire immediately called "time," and the players of both nines rushed to the side of the boy who lay prostrate on the ground.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE IMPERIALS IN THE LEAD.—THE COMBAT THICKENS.— A TRIPLE PLAY.—VICTORY.—THE SPEECHMAKERS.

For several moments Harry Powers was unconscious. Some one brought a bottle of ammonia and the application of this to his nostrils revived him. Mr. Livingstone wanted him to retire from the game, but Harry protested that he was feeling well, and begged to be allowed to continue to play, which request was finally granted. Three cheers were given him by the spectators, and in response Harry lifted his hat.

"Four to five in their favor and the beginning of the sixth inning," Frank said to his men as they came in. "If we expect to win this game we'll have to get a move on."

Dowd was first at the bat. He got a long-arm swing at the ball, and sent it into left centre, making two bases handily.

"Now we are in for it!" cried Frank cheerily.

Harry Powers was next, and the crowd cheered as he came to the plate. Harry smashed the ball just over the second-baseman's head for a base-hit and Dowd went to third. Two men on the bases and no one out was certainly a fine prospect!

"Now to knock in a run," said Frank as he eagerly grasped a bat. He waited until he got the ball where he

wanted it, and then sent it through the air like lightning, near the third base line. To all intents and purposes it was a base-hit, but Bill Hicks, who was playing near the base, made a high leap and dragged down the ball. Dowd had started for home, and Hicks had no difficulty in putting him out. Jack Ryan sent a "lovely" fly to Degnan in left field and Frank's hustling came to naught.

Murphy opened the inning for the Imperials. He caught the ball far up on the bat, and it went in the direction of first base in a miserable, squirming sort of a way. Reynolds ran to meet it, while Kelly, the second-baseman, covered first base. But do what he would Reynolds was unable to get hold of the ball. It twisted and squirmed like a wounded snake, and Murphy landed safely at first.

"Chidwick at the bat!" called out the scorer.

"Chidwick, remember the main thing is to make a run," Hicks advised. Chidwick's life was short and pathetic. He came—he saw—and he went out on a foul ball.

"Quinn at the bat!" was the next message of the scorer.

"Knock the ball out of the lot," whispered Bill Hicks. "We need another run."

Quinn did not quite do this, but he hit a line ball just too high for Kelly to reach, and it netted him two bases, Murphy going to third.

Wheaton was the next batsman. He sent a ball that mowed the grass near third base. Jack Ryan picked it up handily, and made a feint of throwing it to first.

Murphy, expecting the ball to be thrown, started for

home. Ryan then let the ball fly at Joe Smith, and Murphy was painfully surprised. A great cheer went up from the spectators on account of this play. It was one that Frank had seen "King" Kelly make and he had practised his men in it. Degnan now faced the pitcher of the Olympics. Dowd kept the ball away from him, but Degnan laughed and said that he had once worked in a restaurant and was a good "waiter". He finally took his base on called balls. Bill Hicks followed him at the bat, and made a safe hit to right field, sending Quinn home.

Harry Powers tried to throw Wheaton out as he came on a hot run for third base, but he did not gauge the distance properly, and the ball went over the third-baseman's head. Wheaton was urged by his coacher to keep on running and he did so. But there was another surprise in store for the Imperials. Frank, when he saw Harry getting ready to throw, ran quickly behind third base and neatly trapped the ball which Ryan could not reach. Wheaton had over-run third and by the time the coacher discovered that Frank was behind the base it was too late for Wheaton to get back, so Frank passed the ball to Ryan and Wheaton made the third out.

Great cheering followed Frank's clever play.

"Score one for 'King' Kelly again," Frank said to himself, as he raised his hat in recognition of the applause.

"If these youngsters stay a few years at this college and keep together," Jack Frisbie declared, enthusiastically, "they'll do the Rosehills and Jaspers every time!"

The Olympics came in to begin the seventh inning with the score six to four in favor of the Imperials.

Ed Kelly stepped up to the plate to face the tricky curves which Quinn had in store for him. He sent a hot grounder to Bill Hicks which that player failed to connect with, and thus gained his base easily. Jim Reynolds hit the first ball pitched, and it travelled so fast that the pitcher could not get out of the way, so the ball stuck in his hands, which he had thrown up unconsciously to protect his face. La Marche tipped a slow, wriggling ball, just outside the foul line, but before Hicks on third could get near it, the ball suddenly changed its mind and rolled fair, La Marche making first, Kelly going to second. Tom Healy was unfortunate enough to bat right into Chidwick's hands, and thus Kelly was forced out on third base, Healy himself narrowly escaping being put out on first.

"Just our luck," said Frank disconsolately. "We don't seem to be able to make a run. I think we must be hoodooed."

Joe Smith stepped up to the plate.

"Try to bang it to the Milky Way, Joe," Frank begged, plaintively.

The batsman swung the bat over his shoulder and whaled the ball over the first-baseman's head, sending La Marche home.

A hearty cheer from the spectators announced their joy over the run.

Dowd, the next batter, ended the inning by retiring on a fly ball to the second-baseman.

Jim Pierce started the dance for the Imperials by getting his base on balls. Reade, who followed him, was easily put out on three strikes, Pierce reaching second by a clever

steal. Kenny's base-hit sent Pierce to third, and Murphy stepped up to the plate. As soon as the first ball was pitched, Kenny ran to second base. Smith threw the ball to second, and Pierce, remembering that there is no place like home, started in that direction. As soon as Kelly at second-base got the ball, he sent it back like a streak, and though Pierce made a magnificent dive for the plate, Smith put him out amid great applause. Murphy hit a high foul fly off the corner of third base which Ryan captured, thus ending any hope that the Imperials might have cherished of making a run.

The eighth inning began with Harry Powers at the bat, the score being six to five in favor of the Imperials.

"We have got to get a run this trip, Harry," said Frank, "otherwise we are beaten."

Harry hit the ball for what seemed a base-hit, but Chidwick made a splendid one-hand pick up and threw Harry out.

Frank's turn was next. He faced the pitcher just as he had seen "King" Kelly do and there was a look of grim determination written on his face.

A few moments later the clear voice of the umpire called, "Three strikes, striker out," and Frank sought the seclusion of the players' bench.

Ryan did better than his captain. He sent the ball on a long drive to Degnan in left field, but it was captured after a hard run and the inning was over.

"Chidwick to the bat!" called out the scorer, when the Imperials came in.

The batsman led off with a hit to Frank, which Frank

fumbled, Chidwick thus going to first. Quinn followed with a ground ball to Reynolds, which the first-baseman let pass, and Quinn reached the base safely, advancing Chidwick to second.

Dowd pitched a wild ball while Wheaton, the next batsman, was at the bat, and both runners took another base.

Wheaton made a sacrifice hit towards first which Reynolds captured and sent home, but Chidwick arrived before the ball and a run was scored.

Quinn was now on third base, and Wheaton on first. Degnan stepped up to the plate and knocked the ball into left field. Healy got under it nicely and as soon as he captured it, Quinn started for home. Healy, who was expecting this, made a long line throw, and the ball beat the runner. Wheaton tried to reach third base, but Smith, the catcher of the home team, threw him out at third and ended the inning. It was a seesaw game all the way through, with the advantage on the side of the Imperials.

The ninth inning began with the score seven to five in favor of the visitors. If anything was to be done by Frank's team, this was the time to do it, as it was their last chance. Kelly stepped up to the plate, but he was too anxious and struck at a wide outcurve, sending the ball into the first-baseman's hands. Reynolds fared no better, as his hit did not get beyond the diamond, being cleverly fielded by Bill Hicks, who threw the runner out at first.

By this time hope had died in Frank's heart. The spectators were getting ready to leave, as another "put out" would end the inning and the game. La Marche hit the ball to the pitcher and started for first base. Quinn, to

make sure, threw the ball easily to Wheaton, but he threw it too easily, and it struck the ground, passing the first baseman, and allowing La Marche to go to second. Healy followed at the bat, and gave the second ball pitched a resounding whack into right field. La Marche ran for third base and Frank, who was near-by, shouted to him to run on home. The right-fielder saw the move and let the ball fly to cut off the runner. On came the ball, and on came La Marche. The ball seemed to be on the raise. The catcher noticed this, and when it came to him he made a mad leap into the air, touched the ball with the tip of one finger, but did not stop its flight.

The crowd at the side of the field parted and gave the ball its way, and on it rolled, the catcher after it. Before he had captured it, a wild cry went up. Men shouted, boys danced for joy, and ladies stood in their carriages and waved their handkerchiefs as Healy crossed the plate and tied the score. A more unexpected thing could hardly have happened. There were two men out and the Olympics were two runs behind their opponents. The cheering lasted fully two minutes.

When play was resumed, Smith was at the bat. The hopes of the college boys had now revived and Smith, the Olympics' catcher had a confident smile in his eyes as he faced the pitcher. His confidence was not misplaced, for he knocked a safe hit over the first-baseman's head. He ran to first and then started for second. The first-baseman captured the ball, and threw it to Kenny at second base. Kenny muffed it, and Smith kept on running. Kenny picked up the ball and sent it to Hicks. Hicks dropped it

and Smith continued on home. Hicks picked up the ball, and not having much time threw it as hard as he could to the catcher. The ball was low and reaching the catcher on an ugly bounce got away from him, allowing Smith to score.

This run electrified the crowd again and the cheering was renewed. It had been a risky piece of work on Smith's part, but as long as he had succeeded so brilliantly there was nothing but praise for him.

"Just what 'King' Kelly would have done," was Frank's remark as Smith came home.

Dowd followed at the bat and ended the inning by going out on a foul fly to the catcher.

The Imperials came in for the last half of the ninth inning and the excitement ran high. If they made a run, the score would be even, and ten innings or more would have to be played. If they scored two runs, the game would be theirs.

Silence reigned as Bill Hicks, the captain of the Imperials, stepped up to the plate. Three balls passed by him and then the ominous sound of a base-hit broke the stillness. The ball landed in a safe place just over the second-baseman's head. Pierce followed at the bat and sent the ball cutting along the grass to Frank. The ball was hit hard and Frank failed to hold it, allowing it to pass from his hands to the third-baseman. Hicks reached second and Pierce first base. The hearts of the spectators sank into their boots. Two men on base and no one out !

"Reade at the bat !" cried the scorer.

Reade hit a sharp ball to the pitcher, which Dowd

muffed. By the time he had captured the ball it was too late to throw it to either third or first.

This error filled the bases, and once more hope died in the hearts of the Olympics. A base-hit would probably send in two runs and the game would be lost.

The in-fielders of the Olympics, fearing that a sacrifice hit would be made, closed in nearer to the batter, to prevent if possible the man on third from scoring.

Kenny, after two strikes had been called on him, hit a fly ball between second base and short-stop, apparently well out of reach of the players who guarded these positions.

Some one of the Imperials, seeing where the ball was going, cried out to the runners, "Come in ! come in !" and they obeyed the summons. The moment the ball was hit Frank, who was nearest it, ran as fast as he knew how. He looked up just as the ball was about to descend, and making a high leap into the air, managed to catch it with three fingers. When he recovered from his surprise, he started back along the base line towards third, and touched Pierce. By this time Hicks, who was on his way home, seeing that the ball was captured, ran back to third. Frank however, had the same base in view, and as soon as Pierce was put out, Frank made for the third base with all possible speed. It was a very close race, but Frank proved the faster runner and arrived first, thus making a most remarkable triple play, and winning the game. So quickly had the work been done that the Imperials, and in fact all the spectators, were for the moment dazed.

When the crowd awoke to the play, it was wild with de-

light. Not in a great many years had such a play been seen on the ball field and the college boys were in an ecstasy over it. Before Frank knew where he was, some of the boys tossed him on their shoulders, and carried him back to the college in triumph.

It had been a perfect game of baseball and the collegians had pulled victory out of the fire. Mr. Livingstone was so pleased that he sent orders to the college kitchen that a lunch be prepared for the Imperials and the Olympics; a privilege usually accorded only to the special games played by the first nine.

The players took off their ball suits and donned what Rogers called their "citizen clothes." Then they made their way to the refectory, where a fine lunch was ready for them. Mr. Livingstone presided, and when the ball players had finished eating, made a neat little speech of welcome. Bill Hicks, the captain of the Imperials, responded: "I am glad of the chance to thank Mr. Livingstone for his hospitality, and also the members of the Olympic Baseball Club for the kind treatment they have given us—not on the baseball field, but off it. (Laughter.) Of course we are disappointed at not winning the game. We have won every game so far this season, and we hoped to go through without a break. However, since that cannot be, we are better satisfied in losing to the Olympic Baseball Club than we would be to any other. (Great cheering.) Some day we hope to come back again for another game, and then, knowing what gentlemen the members of the Olympic Baseball Club are, we feel sure that after experiencing so many kindnesses at their hands, they will

add one more and let us have the victory." (Renewed laughter and cheering.)

When the captain of the Imperials finished his graceful little speech, Frank was called upon to reply.

Speechmaking was a new experience for him, and he was rather backward in coming forward. Rogers, who was not on the nine, but who managed "to work things," and thus get into the lunch, shouted to Frank: "Get up and tell them that you feel like the Irishman who tumbled into the well and when some one heard him groaning and asked him if he was dead he holloed back, 'No, I'm not dead, but I'm *spacheless*.'" "

A general laugh greeted this remark, during which Frank managed to get on his feet. He was a trifle nervous at first, but after a few sentences he went on swimmingly.

"I must admit," he said, "that we won a game to-day which I did not expect we would win. I would consider it no disgrace to be beaten by such fine ball players as the Imperials. (Cheering by the Olympics.) After seeing the good-natured way Captain Hicks and his men have taken defeat, it makes me feel almost as if I would be better satisfied if the honors were evenly divided."

"Yes, that's right!" shouted Rogers; "let's divide up. We'll take the game, and give the Imperials the rest." (Loud laughter and cries of "Keep quiet, Rogers.")

"Captain Hicks," Frank continued after order was restored, "has said that he hopes to meet us again. We are ready to accommodate him at any time—but we would prefer to leave well enough alone. (Laughter.) The day I receive a challenge from Captain Hicks I shall sit down

immediately and accept it—and at the same time I shall shiver in my boots. (More laughter.) I now propose that we give three cheers for the Imperials.”

The cheers were given, and the Imperials returned the compliment. The lunch then came to an end, and the Imperials gathered up their satchels and hurried to the train, Frank and his men giving them a parting salute.

Thus ended a game of ball that was remembered for many a day by the small boys of the college.

CHAPTER XXV.

VINCENT ALLEN'S ILLNESS.—FRANK'S LAST VISIT.—DEATH IN THE COLLEGE.

VINCENT ALLEN's disease made rapid inroads on his strength, and by the middle of May the doctor attending him said that he could not live much longer. Vincent was reconciled to the inevitable. He had received the last sacraments, and when death came it would not find him unprepared. Lying asleep on his pillow, he looked, indeed, as if death had already claimed him. As he grew weaker Frank's visits became more frequent. Sister Josephus, seeing how much the dying boy enjoyed his comrade's company, gave Frank access at all times to the sick room.

Vincent's father and mother were dead, and he was under the care of a guardian who came occasionally to the college. Having no near relatives, his friendship for Frank became daily greater as he felt the end drawing nearer. Frank was to him, indeed, like a younger brother.

May slipped by and it was now the last day of the month. The Latin lessons had to be abandoned owing to Vincent's extreme weakness. Frank had made wonderful progress, thanks to Vincent's coaching and his own energy, and he stood as good a chance of winning the medal as any other boy in the class.

On the evening of the last day of May, Frank came as usual to see his companion. He found him cheerful, but very weak and exhausted. When Frank had taken his seat at the bedside, Vincent caught hold of one of his hands.

"What a good friend you've been to me, coming here so often when you ought to have been enjoying yourself in recreation with the others."

Frank noticed the wasted hand and arm and the glassy look in his companion's eyes, and the sight of these frightened him.

"Oh, I haven't been half as good to you as I ought to have been," Frank protested. Then he asked, "How do you feel to-night?"

"I have no pain, but I'm so weak." Vincent moved uneasily in the bed.

"Wouldn't you like to be higher on the pillow?" Frank asked.

"Yes, I think I would."

Frank gently caught him below the arms and raised him to a more comfortable position.

"That's better. I'm quite easy now, only so tired. I feel as if I would like a long, long sleep."

"Well, perhaps you will sleep well to-night."

"I slept for a little while this afternoon," Vincent said, "and I dreamt that I was dying, and do you know, I wasn't at all afraid?"

"Oh, don't say that," Frank pleaded, the tears starting in his eyes. "You're not so bad as that."

"Yes, I think I am. I don't like to speak in this way, Frank, but I'm afraid I must. I know it makes you feel badly, but I want to warn you, so that if I should die, it won't come suddenly as a shock to you."

Frank made a great effort to control his grief, but a sob escaped him.

"There now, old fellow," Vincent said, "don't worry about me."

Frank succeeded in controlling himself. "I'm sorry for giving way, Vincent, and I won't do it any more. I ought to cheer you up, instead of crying myself."

"That's all right ; I only wanted to warn you. Now, let's talk of something else."

Frank was not sorry to change the subject of conversation, as death had terrors for him that it had lost for his companion.

"How did you get along in Latin class to-day ?" Vincent asked.

"Oh, splendidly ! The teacher complimented me and said my progress was wonderful."

"You'll get that medal yet."

"I have a fair chance for it, thanks to your help."

"When does the examination come off ?"

"The oral examination is to be held on next Monday, and the written one on Wednesday."

"Not much time left, is there ?"

"No, but enough to review all that we are going to be examined in."

"Well, I do hope you'll win the medal. Your mother will be so pleased."

"Yes, mamma will be delighted."

The two boys chatted until the bell rang which summoned the students to chapel for May devotions. Frank then rose to go.

"Good-night, Vincent ; I'll be over in the morning after breakfast."

"Good-by, Frank. Say a prayer for me to-night."

Frank looked in surprise at his companion, and said :
"Not 'good-by' ; you mean 'good-night'."

"No, I mean 'good-by.' I'm so weak I think I may die any time now, and that is why I bid you good-by."

Frank came nearer to the bed and took the outstretched hand. It was so cold that a shiver ran through him. "Well, Vincent, I'll say good-by if you wish it, but I'll be over in the morning to see you just the same."

He left the room and there were tears in his eyes as he joined the other boys in the chapel. He began to realize, from the coldness of Vincent's hand, that death might soon come. After Frank had retired, Vincent lay quietly looking out of the open window. The night was full of stars, and the joy of summer was in the air. A tall rose-bush grew against the side of the house, and the odor of fresh roses came in through the window. From where the sick boy lay he could see the lighted chapel and a figure of St. Aloysius, the patron of youth, standing out prominently on one of the stained windows.

Presently the organ sounded on the night air, and Vincent could hear the voices of the choir boys singing the litany. He listened to the sweet melody, following the different ejaculations and repeating them after the choir :

Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted
Pray for us.

Suddenly a great change came over him. His limbs grew rigid, and the sight began to leave his eyes. Sister Josephus just then came into the room and quietly ap-

proached the bedside of the sick boy. She saw in an instant that death was written on his face.

"How do you feel, Vincent?" she asked. He was unable for a moment to speak, but when he got his breath he answered slowly, "I think I'm dying."

Sister Josephus sent a messenger for one of the priests, who quickly responded and prayed over him. Before the litany of the dying was finished, Vincent's eyes closed, and death came like a gentle sleep.

In the chapel the litany of Loretto had been sung, and night prayers were being said. Just as the prayers were finished a hurried footstep disturbed the stillness, and after a few whispered words between the messenger and Mr. Livingstone, the latter said, quietly and feelingly :

"We will now say five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys for the repose of the soul of Vincent Allen, who has just died."

As the prefect finished speaking the quietness of death reigned in the chapel. Mr. Livingstone began: "Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name—" Suddenly a violent sob burst from Frank, interrupting the prayers. A prefect left his place and going to where Frank was, led him quietly away, and the prayers were finished.

The boys filed out of the chapel to their dormitories, whispering in fear to each other. Mirth and laughter were frozen, and death ruled that night within the college walls.

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Two days afterwards Vincent Allen was buried. Solemn Mass was sung for him in the chapel, and his body was laid in a little cemetery at the side of the chapel, where a few other students of the college had found a resting place.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE EXAMINATION.—COMMENCEMENT DAY.—THE LATIN MEDAL.—VINCENT'S GRAVE.—HOME, SWEET HOME.

THE examinations following closely on Vincent Allen's death served as a distraction to Frank. They kept him very busy, and saved him from worrying too much over the loss of his companion. He worked hard at his Latin, partly because it made him forget, but mostly because he was more anxious than ever to win the medal, as he knew this would be the fulfilment of Vincent's desire.

The day of the first examination, which was an oral one, arrived, and Frank came through it with flying colors ; but so also did two of the other boys. It was quite evident that the written examination would be the real test. This examination was held a few days after the oral. It was a very searching one and Frank found it more difficult work committing his knowledge to paper than giving it out by word of mouth.

When the examinations were over the college year was practically at an end. Classes were kept up for a few days longer, but little was done. This was a "dolce far niente" time for the boys. It was too hot for baseball, so they spent their recreations lying under the welcome

shade of the trees, and reading story books. Master Rogers and a few kindred spirits amused themselves at night by bringing June bugs into the study hall and after tying long strips of paper to the legs of these unfortunate creatures, freeing them. The June bugs, finding themselves at liberty would fly about the room, causing a constant tittering. Occasionally one of them would be brought low by a book in the hand of one of the boys, and sometimes these foolish insects would fly into the gaslight and as a consequence, fall a hot mass on some boy's upturned cheek.

The few days before vacation dragged slowly on, and at last Commencement Day arrived. The Commencement exercises were held under a tent on the campus, and every boy was out of bed betimes, and anxious to know who were the medal-men. The exercises began with an address of welcome by one of the graduates. Then followed several speeches, in which the orators touched on the burning questions of the day, and settled off-hand points over the solution of which the thinkers of the country had wearied their brains in vain. After these orations were delivered, the President stepped forward to announce the names of those who had won the medals.

Frank, out of the corner of his eye, could see his mother, Beatrice and his uncle among the spectators. He had said nothing to his mother about his chance of winning a prize.

When the President came to Frank's class, our hero's knees began to tremble. Oh, if only he would get an honorable mention how pleased he would feel ! Vincent Allen had said that he would be satisfied with that.

The President paused for a moment, and then slowly announced : "The medal for proficiency in the Second Preparatory Latin Class is awarded to Francis King !"

Frank's knees now trembled more violently, and his heart beat so strongly against his ribs that he was afraid it would burst through. Mrs. King heard her boy's name, but she did not dare believe that the medal was for him. "There must be another Francis King in the college," she reasoned. Beatrice was first to recover from the surprise, and she was on her feet in an instant, applauding, and, forgetful of everybody present, crying out, "Good for you, Frank ! good for you !" Her cry was heard on all sides, and a ripple of pleasant laughter passed over the assembly.

Frank himself was so overcome that he did not budge until the boy next to him said, "Go up for your medal, King ; the President is waiting for you."

Frank jumped to his feet and ascended the platform on which the President was standing. As he received his medal a burst of applause more prolonged than any that day greeted him, as he was the smallest boy to receive a prize.

An address to the graduates and the valedictory followed, ending the exercises and the college year.

As soon as Frank was at liberty, he hastened to his mother and placed the medal in her hands. Her joy over his triumph it would take a mother to describe. Uncle George, too, was immeasurably pleased. He concluded that sending Frank to college was a good investment. When the exercises were ended the boys and visitors hurried home.

"Before we leave, mamma," Frank said, "I want you to come with me to Vincent's grave. If it had not been for his kindness I would not have won the medal in Latin."

This thoughtfulness on the part of her son pleased Mrs. King, and she gladly accompanied him to where Vincent Allen rested. They knelt in silent prayer at the grave in the little cemetery, and tears came into Frank's eyes as he prayed for the eternal happiness of his dead companion, who had been so kind to him, and from whom he had learned so many good lessons, which made him a better boy, and which had a lasting effect upon his after life. When they had finished praying Mrs. King placed a bouquet of flowers which she carried upon Vincent Allen's grave, and then mother and son returned to the college. By the time they got back nearly all the boys and visitors had taken their departure.

The President and Uncle George were in deep conversation, and when Frank came up to them, Uncle George patted him on the head and said he had the right stuff in him. After all, Uncle George was not such a horrid old man !

A carriage was in waiting, and the little party entered it. The quiet of vacation time had already descended upon what Rogers was fond of calling "these classic walls." The campus, usually alive with boys, was deserted, and the woods no longer rang with the merry shouts of Dobson and his friends. A summer silence wrapped itself about the place.

Frank passed out of the gate which led to the college grounds. He had gone through a year filled with inci-

dents. In some things he had not acquitted himself very well, but on the whole he was a boy of a larger experience, and, thanks to Vincent Allen, he had become less heedless and more serious.

So endeth this chronicle of a boy's first year at college.

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